‘THE FORLORN HEROINE OF A TERRIBLY SAD LIFE STORY’

Romance in the Journals of L.M. Montgomery

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

When the journals of L.M. (Lucy Maud) Montgomery (1874–1942) were first published in the 1980s, they became instantly widely read, just as her best-seller novel *Anne of Green Gables* had done in 1908. This can partly be explained by the literary quality and readability of the journals themselves. Not much, however, has been written about these aspects of the journals. Since our understanding of Montgomery's life is largely based on her journals, it is crucial that we take a closer look at what happens in the text. This dissertation is the first extensive study of the literary facets of Montgomery's life-writing – mainly her journals, but also her letters and scrapbooks. With the focus on romance, both as a rhetorical device and subject matter, I explore the way Montgomery writes about her male and female love interests with what I term *fictionalisation*.

By analysing the ten unpublished journal manuscripts as well as the published versions of them, *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery* (1985–2004) and *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery* (2012–2013), I approach diary as a literary genre. I explore questions such as how editing affects diary writing and its analysis and how literary conventions are employed in diaries. I demonstrate that for Montgomery the conventional romance is often a façade, one that is undercut by more subversive nuances, as presented for instance in the discourse of *female intimacy*. Intimate relationships with women come out as a more satisfying alternative to the conventional romance plot. Nevertheless, when this material is transferred to Montgomery's fiction it turns into the expected conventional romance between a man and a woman.

Montgomery's self-conscious way of using romance must therefore be seen as one of the main features of her journals and one that may also influence our readings of her novels. Familiar literary conventions found in the diary, from the two suitors motif to the suicidal lesbian, show how aware Montgomery was of the literary and social customs of her time, whether of the 1890s or the 1930s. The use of the motif of the fallen woman, the tragedy of *Hamlet*, the fairy tale, especially Cinderella, the gothic novel and the satirical diary novel showcase the diversity of Montgomery's art as she recreates the story of her own romances in her life-writing.

Although Montgomery's journal portrays a rather traditional romantic heroine, 'the forlorn heroine of a terribly sad life story', in Montgomery's own words, I maintain that analysing her journals in the same detailed way we analyse her fiction expands on our understanding both of her life and her writing. What is more, our understanding of diary as a genre can benefit from what is found in Montgomery's highly elaborate journals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the outcome of a lifelong fascination with L.M. Montgomery's work and life. Maybe it began when I was reading *Emily of New Moon* as an eight-year-old. Or maybe its outlines started to form when I found the first volume of *The Selected Journals* at the University of Helsinki library in 2005, sat down to read it and could not stop.

Be that as it may, it is certain that I could not have been able to write the dissertation without the help of several people. After all, it is easy to begin things but hard to see them through unless you get advice and encouragement along the way.

First I would like to thank Professor Emerita Mary Henley Rubio, who has offered me her help with exceptional generosity throughout the years. When I first arrived in the Guelph Archives in 2009, still a fledgling Master's student, Mary happened to be there and suggested that I take advantage of the Editing Copies of *The Selected Journals* that she had just donated to the archives. Without them and without Mary's rich knowledge of all things Montgomery, I would still be in the archives copying the journals and trying to figure out Montgomery's often cryptic handwriting. Furthermore, without her and Professor Emerita Elizabeth Hillman Waterston's work on Montgomery and her journals this dissertation would not exist. I am grateful to them both.

My supervisor, Professor Bo Pettersson, has an uncanny knack of offering calm and insightful advice and pushing you forward, while at the same time making you feel that there is nothing easier than writing a scientific monograph. For all his help during the writing of my Master's Thesis, as well as this dissertation, I thank him. Docent Anna Kuismin has acted as a co-supervisor at the final stages of my PhD work and without her knowledge, my understanding of the diary genre would be notably narrower. I thank her for interesting conversations and inviting me to take part in her 'Annan salonki' seminar.

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department, such as Professor Heta Pyrhönen, Sanna Nyqvist, Laura Oulanne and Vesa Kyllönen.

While the writing of a PhD dissertation can often be all-consuming, there is more to life than Montgomery. For keeping my head above water as well as listening to my worries and sharing my enthusiasm, I thank all my friends, near and far. You are true 'bosom friends'. I thank especially Anna Kaartamo-Virta and her family, Tiina Oikarinen, Juuso Paaso, Karoliina Romanoff and her family, and Maria Heiskanen for dissertation therapy. My childhood friends Inari Alasoini, Tiina Tolvanen and Sami Hietanen keep me true to myself, which is not always easy amidst the halls of academia. To the wonderful ladies of Edith Söderklan I say: 'Tuulta, tulta ja merta!'

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I dedicate this dissertation to Mary Henley Rubio and Elizabeth Hillman Waterston, the pioneers, and to Maud.

Helsinki, November 2015

PERMISSIONS

Quotations from L.M. Montgomery's unpublished journals and other archival materials are excerpted with the permission of the L.M. Montgomery Collection, Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library.

Excerpts from Nora Lefurgey Campbell's unpublished diary (four pages) are reproduced with the permission of Mary Beth Cavert (e-mail from Cavert, October 6, 2015), who in turn got permission to use four pages of the diary from Bette and Edmund Campbell.

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ABBREVIATIONS

After Green Gables	Montgomery, L.M. 2006. *After Green Gables: L.M. Montgomery's Letters to Ephraim Weber, 1916–1941*. Edited by Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
AGG	Montgomery, L.M. 2008 (1908). *Anne of Green Gables*. London: Puffin Books.
AHD	Montgomery, L.M. 1981 (1917) *Anne's House of Dreams*. London: Puffin Books.
AI	Montgomery, L.M. 1992 (1915) *Anne of the Island*. New York: Bantam Books.
AWP	Montgomery, L.M. 1993 (1936) *Anne of Windy Poplars*. New York: Bantam Books.
CJ1	Montgomery, L.M. 2012. *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery. The PEI Years, 1889–1900*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
CJ2	Montgomery, L.M. 2013. *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery. The PEI Years, 1901–1911*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston (eds.). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
The Complete Journals	*The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, two volumes.
EC	Editing Copies of L.M. Montgomery's journals. Unpublished. Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library.
ENM	Montgomery, L.M. 1989 (1923) *Emily of New Moon*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.
EMC	Montgomery, L.M. 1983 (1925). *Emily Climbs*. New York: Bantam Books.
EQ	Montgomery, L.M. 1989 (1927). *Emily's Quest*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.
My Dear Mr. M	Montgomery, L.M. 1992. *My Dear Mr. M: Letters to G.B. MacMillan from L.M. Montgomery*. Edited by

	Francis W. P. Bolger and Elizabeth R. Epperly. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
SJ1	Montgomery, L.M. 1985. *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery, Volume 1: 1889–1910*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
SJ2	Montgomery, L.M. 1987. *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, Volume 2: *1910–1921*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
SJ3	Montgomery, L.M. 1992. *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, Volume 3: *1921–1929*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
SJ4	Montgomery, L.M. 1998. *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, Volume 4: *1929–1935*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
SJ5	Montgomery, L.M. 2004. *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, Volume 5: *1935–1942*. Edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
The Selected Journals	*The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery*, five volumes.
TS	Typescript of L.M. Montgomery's journals. Unpublished. Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library. XZ5 MS A021. L.M. Montgomery Collection. L.M. Montgomery Journals.
UJ1–UJ10	Unpublished manuscripts of L.M. Montgomery's journals. Ten volumes. Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library. XZ5 MS A001. L.M. Montgomery Collection. L.M. Montgomery Journals.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: ROMANCE 'PURE AND SIMPLE'

'For pure, joyous, undiluted delight give me romance', writes L.M. Montgomery (*CJ1*: 433) in her journal in an entry dated April 4, 1899.[1] Although referring to her preferred type of reading here – she alludes to Anthony Hope's romance novel *Phroso* (1897) –, Montgomery's love for romance extended both to her own life and her journals. In addition to revealing Montgomery's personal taste in choosing what books to read, the above quotation brings to light her attitude towards depicting romance in textual form: 'It [*Phroso*] was romance pure and simple, without any alloy of realism or philosophy. I like realistic and philosophical novels in spells, but for pure … delight give me romance. I always revelled in fairy tales' (*CJ1*: 433). Romance 'pure and simple' is also what Montgomery supposedly presents to her readers in the journals when depicting her love affairs, but as this dissertation aims to demonstrate, the matter is more complicated than she would have us believe.

Developing this topic in an entry dated February 27, 1907, Montgomery reads over her old diary and relives past events and memories. Referring to a teenage beau, she pauses to find an adequate word for their relation: 'I hate the word "flirtation" – it sounds cheap and vulgar and those little moonshinings were sweet and innocent and harmless' (*CJ2*: 170). 'Flirtation' clearly carries a connotation too strong for Montgomery to use in her journal, since, if we are to trust her, 'those little moonshinings' were above all innocent and harmless. Comparing this excerpt with the one above, it becomes clear that even for Montgomery herself, writing about romance was definitely anything but 'pure and simple'. She might have asked herself when editing the journals for publication, how to refer to her teenage romances in the journals without compromising her later role as a minister's wife in

1 Throughout the dissertation I refer to *The Complete Journals 1889–1911* (2012, 2013) when an entry is available in them for practical reasons. For material after 1911, I refer either to *The Selected Journals* volumes 2–5 (1987–2004) or to the unpublished manuscripts (entries that were omitted from *The Selected Journals*). The quotations from the unpublished journal ledgers are based on the editing copy by the editors of *The Selected Journals* (Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston), which I was kindly let to peruse at the Archival and Special Collections of University of Guelph, Ontario, with the permission of Professor Mary Rubio. I abide by Montgomery's usage of dating her entries by presenting first month and then date.

a small country parish. And we must ask, analysing her texts, if the journals actually are 'fairy tales' or give accurate and realistic portrayals of Montgomery's romantic adventures and experiences.

Reading the journals we are very much invited to pore over their narrative, just as Montgomery does when reading her old diary: 'Reading over those old days always stirs my heart and nature to the very deeps and touches the "source of tears"' (*CJ2*: 170). That is, as readers, our heartstrings should stir too and our 'source of tears' will most definitely be touched. However, it is crucial to examine how this emotional effect is created and how the journals present one of the main themes in literature, romance, in relation to both men and to women. I intend to show that although Montgomery's diurnal writing might seem realistic and honest, in the journals there is in fact a conscious author at work on all levels. What is more, at the centre of Montgomery's journals and their romantic narrative is consistently 'the forlorn heroine of a terribly sad life story' (*CJ2*: 35), in other words, Montgomery herself as the main romantic character of her life story.

1.1 AIMS, METHODS AND STRUCTURE

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born on November 30, 1874 in Prince Edward Island and died on April 24, 1942 in Toronto. She is probably one of the world's most famous writers for children and young adults, in the same league with the likes of Louisa May Alcott and Astrid Lindgren, and most likely the most famous Canadian author worldwide.[2] Montgomery is best known for her first novel *Anne of Green Gables* (1908) and its endearing and enduring character, the read-haired orphan Anne Shirley. Montgomery drew from her own experiences of growing up as an orphan raised by her maternal grandparents in the rural Prince Edward Island when she wrote her twenty novels as well as hundreds of short stories and poems. In 1911, as an author of international fame, Montgomery married Reverend Ewan Macdonald and they moved to Leaskdale, Ontario, and had three sons, one of whom died in infancy.

Knowing the story of Montgomery's life at least to some extent is important in analysing her journals. It allows readers to recognise gaps in the text or to notice how the age of the author affects the writing. What is more, the matter is further complicated since Montgomery's journals are thoroughly edited. As a genre, the diary is autobiographical to the highest degree, so analysing one requires not only the separation of the diary's author from its narrator, but also a careful combination of keeping in mind the historical realities of the diary writer's life and treating the

2 See Lorraine York's (2004: 98–116) article on Montgomery's celebrity and star-like status.

text as literature, not merely as historical fact. Even though this dissertation is very much a literary study that employs as its methods close reading and stylistic analysis, some knowledge and understanding of history, especially cultural history, as well as Montgomery's life, is needed.[3] Furthermore, when discussing topics such as romantic interactions between men and women as well as women and women, history of sexuality and courtship must also be included. Montgomery was very much a product of her time, from the last years of the late-Victorian period to the modern decades after the First World War.[4]

However, the main focus of my dissertation is on the journals as textual products and literary works. Scholarship on Montgomery is nowadays extensive and thorough in its scope, ranging from the early reception of Montgomery's works (Lefebvre 2015) to the global influence of *Anne of Green Gables* (Ledwell and Mitchell 2013). Nevertheless, a comprehensive study on the aspects of Montgomery's autobiographical writings – her journals, letters, scrapbooks and photographs – is still lacking. This dissertation aims to help fill this gap. By focusing on the ten unpublished journal volumes as well as the published versions of them – *The Selected Journals of L.M. Montgomery* (1985–2004) and *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery* (2012–2013) –, I analyse Montgomery's main autobiographical project from the point of view of a literary scholar.

In other words, I am interested in *how* something is said, rather than *why* it is said. The key concepts and terms, such as *the narrating I* and *the narrated I*, *fictionalisation*, *audience*, *female intimacy* and *romance*, are interrelated and tie in with the main questions that are the starting point for my study. I examine how Montgomery depicts her romances in the journals and how, for instance, audience and fictional conventions affect the style of writing. I also scrutinise how stylistic choices influence the reading of the love affairs – why, for example, readers may sympathise with the narrator of the journals even when she engages in what might be called *literary narcissism*. However, asking the *why* cannot completely be kept at

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3 Suzanne L. Bunkers (1988: 193) calls this *the situational context* of women's diaries, that is, the purpose and perception of the intended audience of the writer. This situational context, although hard to reconstruct, is according to Bunkers (1988: 193), one of the most intriguing areas of examination, because it 'yields a sense of the writer's character and personality as she shapes her self-image through her writing'. For texts as complex and sophisticated as Montgomery's journals, however, going beyond the intentions of the author and concentrating on the narrative aspects of the text seems a more fruitful starting point.

4 Irene Gammel (2008: 31) articulates this by highlighting the influence of the Victorian period on Montgomery's personality: 'Growing up during this period, Maud had imbibed its images and values, its codified behavior, its rigid class structure, and its expectations of women's desire for marriage, children, and domesticity'.

bay from the analysis and trying to dissect why Montgomery presents her romantic relationships in her diary writing the way she does runs as the main motivation throughout this dissertation.

Another pivotal aspect of the dissertation is treating the different journal versions as well as other autobiographical material as interrelated documents that present diverse renderings of Montgomery's romanticised life story. Taking into account the methods of textual studies, in which archival material and various versions of a given text are studied, I base my readings of Montgomery's journals on material that is not always printed or published and not always diary text. Archival work is crucial with a writer like Montgomery, who was so good at both compiling and concealing. Reading beyond the story Montgomery intended us to read is paramount when studying the textual versions of her autobiography. Hence, even Montgomery's fiction can be approached from an autobiographical perspective, and thus I explore the connections between romance in fictional and diary writing and the changes in theme and style as the genre changes.

There is some chronological order to the succession of the chapters. I begin with a discussion of Montgomery's teenage infatuations and school-time romances in chapter 2, and go on to analyse a more grown-up depiction of romance, one that follows the convention of the two suitors, in chapter 3. These two chapters especially probe the question of fictional models in diary writing and examine romances with men. My claim is that Montgomery covertly presents an alternative narrative for the conventional romance plot. In this counter-narrative the appearance of male suitors does not provide the traditional catharsis in the readers or in the heroine of the journals. What would typically follow in a romance plot – falling in love and marriage – is resisted and reshaped by a narrative pattern that eschews discussions of love and presents the suitors as unsuitable and unromantic.

However, referring to chronology in Montgomery's journals is extremely difficult, since they have been revised and edited several times. As an example of this, chapter 4 deals with a secret diary Montgomery kept with her friend Nora Lefurgey in 1903. This diary is included neither in the published version of the journals nor in the unpublished manuscripts, but exists in a typescript Montgomery prepared of her journals, archived at the University of Guelph, Ontario. Chapter 4 does not review an actual romance, but rather a discourse that mocks and parodies romantic language and provides an apt carnivalesque contrast to the depiction of romance in Montgomery's personal journals. It also works as a transitional chapter from the discussion of male romances to what I term *female intimacy*.

When contrasted with the conventional romance, the journals portray more intimate bonds and free-flowing romantic language in relation to Montgomery's female 'bosom friends'. Stylistically, it was easier for Montgomery to create the character of a romantic lover in the journals in connection to women than to men. Several scholars, among them Laura Robinson (2012), Mary Beth Cavert (2005) and Temma F. Berg (1994), have already written about Montgomery's female friends, but the topic has not yet been dealt with within the context of the journals and the overall representation of romance in them. In the two final chapters, I examine Montgomery's portrayal of female intimacy, a textual version of the nineteenth-century romantic friendship ideology (chapter 5), and even an alleged lesbian liaison with a female fan (chapter 6).

In the below, I refer to Montgomery's ten-volume journal both as *journals* to highlight their materiality and as *journal* to draw attention to the journal ledgers as a unified autobiographical oeuvre. Since I mainly quote from the published journals, however, both the abridged *Selected Journals* and the two-volume *Complete Journals*, I note in the text when I discuss the handwritten unpublished 'original' journals specifically. Usually, to differentiate between the two – the unpublished and the published journals –, I refer to their published or unpublished status, or to Montgomery's unpublished journal ledgers as *handwritten journals*. I also refer to the journals as such, published or unpublished, as *personal journals*.

However, I do not make a strict distinction between the terms *diary* and *journal*. As Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (2001: 193) have observed, some critics distinguish between the terms by characterising the diary as more intimate and the journal as a kind of public record.[5] This distinction might work with other diaries/journals – such as clearly private diaries by private persons or public journals by authors such as Virginia Woolf or Anaïs Nin[6] –, but it is not very useful in Montgomery's case. Her journals move beyond the definition of private and public, in that they are both. Furthermore, Judy Simons (1990: 7) notes that while 'diary' can be used to refer to 'a daily record of engagements' and intimate writing, whereas 'journal' can be understood as a personal chronicle, 'writers themselves do not always keep to such nice distinctions'.

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5 Alexandra Johnson (2011: 13) defines the difference as follows: 'For purists, a diary is a daily factual record, dated and chronological. A journal is kept more fitfully and for deeper reflection. One records, the other reflects.'

6 See e.g. www.woolfonline.com (April 14, 2015) for excerpts of Woolf's journals. Nin's voluminous diaries were published between 1966 and 1977 in seven volumes.

1.2 ON THE EDITING OF MONTGOMERY'S JOURNALS

In order to understand the many layers of Montgomery's journals one should be familiar with the complicated editing processes that produced them. These include both Montgomery's own editing of her journals in order for them to be posthumously published, as well as the editing done by the editors of the published journals, mainly Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston. Keeping the edited quality of the journals in mind while reading them is essential, since, as Rubio (2008: 1) notes, Montgomery's journals are 'a cache of concealments, displacements, contradictions, and omissions'. In other words, one should take great care when confronted with the myths Montgomery creates of her life in writing and rewriting. Excavating Montgomery's unconscious and conscious tactics, which try to guide the readers to places she wanted them to go, is paramount in studying the journals and cannot be done without taking the editing processes into account.

Montgomery's need to be in control of the story of her life is often recognised in Montgomery scholarship (see e.g. Bolger and Epperly 1992: ix–x; Gammel 2005b: 3–9, 2008: 14–15; Rubio 2008: 1–2; Tiessen and Tiessen 2006: 22–24), but not always examined more closely on the level of actual textual analysis. This side of her writing warrants more attention, especially when it comes to her journals and the analysis of the different versions of them. For instance, characteristically for her, Montgomery begins her life-long correspondence with George MacMillan in 1903 with a lie, or distortion of the truth, when she claims that she is 26, when in fact she is 29 year olds (*My Dear Mr. M*: 2). The urge to be in charge, both of the story and of the version of truth, is typical of Montgomery's autobiographical writing. Distorting historical facts ties in with Montgomery's awareness of her public role as a celebrity, but also with her awareness of the leeway fiction writers have. The editing processes of her journals prove that even as a diarist, Montgomery was first and foremost a fiction writer.[7]

Montgomery began writing the extant diary in 1889 when she was fourteen. Here she would write more than the mere descriptions of weather in her childhood diary (*CJ1*: 3). The originals of these early diaries, written in blank books of varying sizes, are not extant, since they have either been burnt by Montgomery herself or have otherwise disappeared. In 1919 Montgomery started copying the early diaries

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7 See also Simons (1990: 147) who demonstrates that this is common to several other female authors/diarists, for instance Edith Wharton: 'Never forgetting that she [Wharton] was an author, she retained her artistic standards in her personal writing, ever sensitive to style and language'.

by hand into legal-size ledgers adding photos to illustrate the entries (*SJ2*: 341).[8] It remains unclear how much editing Montgomery undertook during this copying process, since comparing the handwritten manuscripts with the original blank books (written during 1889–1918) is not possible. While Montgomery herself claims authenticity – 'I shall be careful to copy it [the journal] exactly as it is written' (*SJ2*: 341) – it is evident that she amended and revised entries while copying them (see also Turner 1994: 95–96).

For example, some pages of the handwritten manuscripts have later been omitted and replaced by Montgomery. Examining the original ledgers, one can note how a page has carefully been razored out and another inserted with a new account of 'what happened' (see also Rubio and Waterston 1985: xxiv).[9] Thus, the readers of the journals have to keep in mind all the diverse existing and non-existing diary versions that communicate in various ways and further confuse the chronology of the journals. As Devereux (2005: 244) notes, '[e]ach of the excisions and reconstructions creates a gap in the story that is both a sign of its incompleteness and a space through which it is possible to see Montgomery constructing her life narrative'.

Rubio (2008: 274) recounts at length the copying process highlighting the fact that Montgomery was an author, meaning that 'shaping, pruning, shading, and amplifying would be any writer's prerogative'.[10] According to the handwritten journals, Montgomery finished copying the early diaries on April 16, 1922 (*SJ3*: 51)

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8 I mostly employ the terms *copying*, *editing* and *rewriting* as synonyms in this dissertation. When referring to Montgomery's process of copying her diaries into the ledgers, I take it for granted that copying in her case also meant editing and rewriting.

9 The ledgers have printed page numbers and where a page has been cut out Montgomery has had to replace the page number by hand in order to maintain the numbering (see also Rubio and Waterston 1987: xx). The replaced pages do not constitute a large percentage of the overall pages. In the first handwritten volume, for instance, nine pages out of 500 have been razored out. However, several entries appear on these rewritten pages, since not all of the entries cover a whole page. As an example of the replaced entries, consider this approximate list of the first handwritten volume:
'p. 37–38: end of entry June 7, 1890, June 11, 1890, July 1, 1890
p. 55–56: Aug 23, 1890
p. 71–72: Dec 5, 1890, Dec 7, 1890, Dec 8, 1890, Dec 10, 1890
p. 105–106: July 1, 1891, July 5, 1891
p. 161–162: April 9, 1892, April 27, 1892, May 2, 1892
p. 251–252: Jan 9, 1894, Jan 10, 1894
p. 313–314: July 30, 1894, July 31, 1894, Aug 1, 1894, Aug 3, 1894, Aug 4, 1894
p. 339–340: Nov 5, 1894, Nov 6, 1894, Nov 11, 1894, Nov 13, 1894, Nov 16, 1894, Nov 20, 1894, Nov 25, 1894
p. 485–486: Feb 2, 1897' (compiled by the author).

10 See e.g. Lejeune (2009: 237–266) on how Anne Frank edited her diary.

– more specifically, she finished the fourth ledger (1916–1919) by this date – and subsequently wrote on notebooks or 'pads or pieces of scrap paper' that she later expanded into journal entries to the ledgers (see Rubio 2008: 274). Still later in life, from 1930 onwards, Montgomery produced a typewritten copy of her journals for one of her two sons, which is a markedly abridged version of the original handwritten journals (see *CJ2*: 69; *SJ4*: 145; Rubio 2008: 421; Rubio and Waterston 1985: xxiii).

In addition to the reworking by Montgomery, the editing performed by the editors of the journals further complicates the matter. The original published versions – *The Selected Journals* – are, as the title suggests, selections and contain entries from the handwritten, unpublished manuscripts only in part. In '"A Dusting Off": An Anecdotal Account of Editing the L.M. Montgomery Journals', Rubio (2001: 32) explains the manifold and difficult editing process that reduced Montgomery's own text by approximately 50 percent as this was required by the publisher. In her e-mail to me (October 9, 2009), Rubio highlights how the publisher's representative wanted first and foremost to produce a 'readable book' that would sell, which tallies with what Fothergill (1974: 5) remarks: 'The most respectable motive behind the amputation of a diary is the desire to make it readable'. Towards the publication of the later volumes – volumes 3 to 5 – the editors did not face similar problems with space restrictions, since the journals had already become best-sellers (Mary Rubio, e-mail message to author, October 3, 2009).[11]

In short, the journals that at first seem straightforward enough are actually thoroughly edited and consist of several time frames. The first frame is the actual events, that is, what supposedly happened at a given moment and was then written about (or imagined) in the diary. The second frame is the time of writing, performed by the actual author of the journals, L.M. Montgomery. The third frame is the time (or times) of copying and organising carried out by Montgomery herself, which might be called *re-narration* (see also Turner 1994: 94). In addition to this copying process, there exists the typewritten version of the journals, another level of re-narration conducted by Montgomery, and the editing of *The Selected Journals* by editors Mary Rubio, Elizabeth Waterston and the publisher's representative William Toye. Only the last of these time frames, the product of editing as *The Selected Journals* and *The Complete Journals*, can be accessed by the public, since they are the only published versions of the journals available.

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11 Published in 2012 and 2013, *The Complete Journals* produce material from the first three handwritten journal ledgers, but they only cover the years 1889–1911. Montgomery kept her journal until 1939, so much of the material is still only available in its archival form.

Montgomery's habit of writing in her journal further confuses the chronology. Although it would be easy to assume that reading the published journals – albeit thoroughly abridged – one is granted an unrestricted access to the original entries, what comes across is actually even more complicated. According to Rubio (2008: 274), in fact, 'all [Montgomery's] journal entries (which are the reconstruction of material from her earlier notebooks and notes) are written in retrospect, by a woman in her mid-forties', and since *The Selected Journals* as well as *The Complete Journals* are based on the handwritten manuscripts, this retrospective perspective permeates them as well. A concrete example of the layered quality of the journals is the handwriting in the manuscripts. The original notebooks having disappeared, the handwriting is not of the original time of writing and there is a lapse between the date of an entry and the actual text. Thus, one reads a text supposedly written by a 14-year-old girl copied and re-narrated in the handwriting of a 45-year-old woman, for instance.[12]

Even on the level of the text, then, the time of narration is not linear or straightforward. Philippe Lejeune's (1989: 4) influential 'law' of autobiography, the autobiographical pact, rules out diaries and journals from autobiography *propre* because their point of view is not retrospective. Montgomery defies this rule as most her diary entries are written in retrospect long after the actual events took place.[13] As Rubio (2001: 32–33) indicates, the journals, seemingly chronological and consisting of sequentially-dated entries, are actually full of flashbacks and inconsistencies in the linear time line. In fact, Montgomery has gaps as long as two years in her journal. Hence, the retrospective entry that follows is usually hardly instantaneous or diurnal, but rather an artistic creation. As it is not known how much modifying and re-narration Montgomery undertook, and as no 'original' or authentic, unedited material exists, the journals must be studied as a constructed narrative.

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12 There are other clues that prove that all of the journal entries are written much later than the date suggests. For instance, Montgomery is clearly aware of the works of Freud in several entries (see e.g. August 31, 1902, *CJ2*: 60 and January 2, 1905, *CJ2*: 118), although Freud's texts were actually not translated into English until 1910 (see Katz 1995: 87).

13 One could argue contra Lejeune that most diaries are indeed written in retrospect and in the past tense, such as the clichéd 'Dear diary, today *was* a nice day' example suggests. Present tense narration in Montgomery's journals is actually relatively rare. Judy Simons (1990: 15) also calls attention to this by stating that 'the retrospective view of experience is common to both forms [autobiography and diary]'.

1.3 DIARY AS A LITERARY GENRE AND MONTGOMERY'S CAREER

Montgomery's career as a fiction writer evolved simultaneously with her diary writing. Montgomery published her first poem in a magazine when she was sixteen years old in 1890, which was soon followed with a prose narrative published in the Montreal *Witness* in 1891 (see Rubio and Waterston 1995: 25 and *CJ1*: 53). As noted above, the extant journal was begun when Montgomery was fourteen in 1889. Fictional writing and journal writing thus go hand in hand with her development as a professional author and it makes sense to examine them in relation to each other (see also Gerson 1999: 56). The ten-volume journal can indeed be seen as the first and foremost source for all her writing, be it letters, novels or her published memoir, *The Alpine Path* (1917), which draws heavily on the journals (see also Yeast 1994: 114). Montgomery often wrote her correspondence based on the journals,[14] and many of her novels include material taken directly from the diary text (see e.g *Emily's Quest*, 1927, see also Epperly 1992: 146).

Thus, the journals should not be approached as Montgomery's secondary work, autobiographical and private and therefore less important, but as her main creative oeuvre that she edited for publication almost her whole life. As Simons (1990: 18) importantly observes in her study on diaries of literary women, private diaries of female authors were not 'just a corollary to their other work but often … the most developed, continuous piece of writing'. Already in 1929 Montgomery was publically thinking about publishing the journals, as can be noted in a letter sent to her Scottish pen-friend George Boyd MacMillan, dated February 19, 1929. Montgomery refers to her illegally published book *Further Chronicles of Avonlea* (1920) and notes: 'The day may come when it will be of value as a curio – (when my diary is published! Your heirs may benefit if not you)' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 147). More privately, Montgomery writes in her journal as early as 1922 that 'my heirs might publish [the journal] after my death, if I do not myself do it before' (*SJ3*: 51) (see also Fiamengo 2005: 180).

Montgomery's first diary was begun already when she was nine years old. Destroying this childish endeavour when she was fourteen, she started a 'new kind of diary' (*CJ1*: 3), which was kept up to the years preceding her death, as discussed in 1.2. These diaries, first published in the 1980s onwards as selections

14 In a letter dated March 1, 1936 to George Boyd MacMillan, Montgomery notes: 'I write letters with my daily notebook on my desk and like to follow along day by day' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 174). Notably, the later journal entries were also based on these daily notebooks. Comparing the letters to MacMillan with the journal entries, one can see that most of their material comes directly from the journals.

in five volumes by the Oxford University Press, edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, comprise over fifty years of day-to-day life, thoughts and experiences of this Canadian woman and her development from an unknown orphan girl to a world-famous author. Steven E. Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna (1996: 55) note that in contrast to diaries of situation, focusing on a tension or dislocation such as travel or war, there exists also the sub-genre of *life diary*, which continues for a longer period and is primarily motivated by the habit of journalising.[15] Montgomery's diary writing was essentially of the latter kind. In this case, the term *life-writing* seems especially apt, since indeed for Montgomery all of life was about writing.[16]

Robert A. Fothergill (1974: 44) discusses diaries that can be defined as 'books of the self', a category under which Montgomery's diary definitely falls. According to Fothergill (1974: 44), 'as a diary grows to a certain length and substance it impresses upon the mind of its writer a conception of the completed book that it might ultimately be'. Thus, treating Montgomery's journal as a kind of book or *oeuvre* is reasonable, since randomness and incoherence, qualities so often connected to the diary as a genre, at least women's diaries, do not have a place in her journals. As Simons (1990: 201) points out, diaries and journals of female authors are 'exacting literary projects', even though they often continue to be relegated to the margins of literary study. Fothergill (1974: 44) also draws attention to the diarist taking considerable care over the physical condition of the manuscript, 'transcribing it, making an index, having it handsomely bound', which also tallies well with what Montgomery does with her journal when she begins copying it in legal-sized ledgers from 1919 onwards.

Montgomery's journals have fascinated literary scholars right from the publication of the first volume in 1985. The interest has often been directed to the biographical information on Montgomery and the background knowledge one can acquire from the diaries about her fictional work (see also Gerson 2002: 21).[17] As Cecily Devereux (2005: 249) has noted, she among others was expecting the

15 See also Fothergill's (1974: 11–37) categorisation of early diaries as journals of travel, 'public' journals such as log-books, journals of conscience and journals of personal memoranda, all of which have affected the modern diary in its various forms.

16 For a more detailed discussion of the term see Marlene Kadar (1992: 3–16), who defines *life-writing* as a 'more inclusive term' that might have critical advantages over *biography* and *autobiography*.

17 What Bunkers and Huff (1996b: 1) mention proves that this tendency ties in with a more general one: 'Within the academy, the diary has historically been considered primarily as a document to be mined for information about the writer's life and times or as a means of fleshing out historical accounts'. They go on to note that 'now, however, the diary is recognized by scholars as a far richer lode' (Bunkers and Huff 1996b: 1).

published journals to 'reveal the full story of *Anne of Green Gables*', in addition to shedding light on what Montgomery was 'really doing and thinking when she wrote her book'. Devereux's words are revealing, since they illuminate the mental attitude people generally have towards diaries: they supposedly reveal the *full* story of a person and unveil what that person was *really* thinking and doing. According to Fothergill (1974: 40), this was also common to most theoretical considerations of diary-writing up until the 1970s, which proceeded from the assumption that its 'defining characteristic is an unpremeditated sincerity'.

Although there now exists a rich subfield of Montgomery studies that specifically focuses on her autobiographical texts (see e.g. Buss 1994; Devereux 2005; Epperly 2005, 2007, 2008; Fiamengo 2005; Gammel 2002, 2005c; Litster 2005; McDonald-Rissanen 2005, 2014; Rubio 2001; Rubio and Waterston 1995, 2005; Turner 1994; Woster 2014) and that fully acknowledges the complexities of Montgomery's autobiographical project, I hope to add to the discussion by emphasising a literary reading of the journals. Following what Simons (1990: 203) has remarked about the diaries of such writers as Fanny Burney, Katherine Mansfield, Louisa May Alcott and Virginia Woolf, I demonstrate that Montgomery's journal too is not merely 'a daily record of events, but a continuous narrative'. Furthermore, journals of professional authors, such as Montgomery's, are 'deliberately fashioned works, capable of great formal flexibility but nonetheless subject to unspoken disciplines and generic conventions' (Simons 1990: 203).

Modern autobiographical scholarship therefore acknowledges that 'autobiography, is of necessity a fiction, that is, a construct arranged by an interpreter' (Miller 1991, as cited in Kagle and Gramegna 1996: 38), and that 'to write of anyone's history is to order, to give form to disparate facts; in short, to fictionalize' (Hutcheon 1988: 82). Both of these insights can be extended to diaries, following Suzanne L. Bunkers' and Cynthia A. Huff's (1996b: 4) observation that 'the narrative structure of diaries can be quite complex in shape and pattern'. As a genre, diary writing affects and is affected by fiction, at least in the case of highly literary diaries such as Montgomery's. Boundaries between genres, such as novels, plays and diaries, can be hard to draw sometimes, and at least Montgomery's journals benefit from a broad perspective that takes into account the range of styles and influences on a writer.

Furthermore, my aim is to examine Montgomery's journals not only from the point of view of the literary texts, but also of the texts as outcomes of the diary writing act, the moment of writing in its immediacy, since, as Fothergill (1974: 56) points out, 'the imprint is the mark on the page left by a person living'. Especially

with a diary that is as complexly structured and edited as Montgomery's, it is crucial to consider the physical context of writing as well as the layers of time an entry might entail.

While several insights by theorists of autobiography, such as Jerome Bruner, Paul John Eakin, Estelle C. Jelinek, Philippe Lejeune, Mary G. Mason, James Olney, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson,[18] are important and helpful for studying diaries – especially autobiographical studies' focus on the subject and its formation in the autobiographical act –, there are specific issues in diary writing not always dealt with in autobiographical studies. Thus, I mainly focus on actual diary scholarship, an area of study extensively covered in the United States, Canada and Britain by writers such as Suzanne L. Bunkers, Helen M. Buss, Harriet Blodgett, Margo Culley, Robert A. Fothergill, Steven E. Kagle, Felicity A. Nussbaum and Judy Simons.[19] Fortunately, in the almost thirty years that separate Nussbaum's seminal essay 'Toward Conceptualizing Diary' (1988) and the current moment, much more literature has surfaced on women's diaries.[20]

Montgomery's journals notably vacillate between autobiography and diary. As Devereux (2005: 247) has pointed out, Montgomery saw her journal as a hybrid between the diary and conventional autobiography, 'a document that would take her readers from her childhood … to the end of her life, within a continuous, constructed narrative, and as a work of art'. Furthermore, the presence of an audience, whether a public one or merely the writer herself, is perhaps more immediate in the diary than any other genre. The writer of a diary simply cannot be unconscious of an audience while jotting down the entries day by day, since at the very least she is addressing herself or her diary. In Simons's (1990: 10) words, 'all diaries imply readership, even if the reader and writer are one and the same'. Even in diaries that were never intended for publication, unlike Montgomery's journal, the self-centredness of the diary genre permeates the text. The autobiographical I is in one way or another the main focus of any diary and especially in a literary journal such as Montgomery's,

18 See e.g. Bruner (1983), Bruner and Weisser (1991), Eakin (1985, 1999), Jelinek (1986), Lejeune (1989, 2009), Mason (1980), Olney (1972), Smith and Watson (1998, 2001).

19 For a thorough discussion on the history of American diary see Culley (1985); for a discussion on the history of autobiographies and diaries in England and Europe see Nussbaum (1988) and Blodgett (1988); and for a discussion on the brief history of diary criticism and theory see Bunkers and Huff (1996b). See also McDonald-Rissanen (2014) on the diaries of Prince Edward Island women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and an excellent overview of Canadian life-writing.

20 Nussbaum (1988: 128) states that 'diary and journal … have seldom been the subject of theoretical discussion' and goes on to state that 'in many ways the status of diary in the 1980s parallels the status of autobiography in the 1950s'.

it is crucial to win the readers over (in order to gain sympathy) and present the autobiographical I in a good or at least best possible light.

Montgomery's literary career intriguingly ties in with the more general paradigm shifts in literary criticism and literary scholarship during the twentieth century. As Benjamin Lefebvre (2003: viii) notes, Montgomery was a woman 'struggling with internalized patriarchal and Protestant values', which connects her with the major changes of the early twentieth century and aptly summarises some of the most interesting aspects of her writing, including her treatment of romance in the journals. Coincidentally, in addition to this personal struggle, Montgomery faced some critical assaults during her career and had to witness her fame slowly altering with the change in literary style and taste, especially with the advent of modernist literature.

However, as Lefebvre (2013: 3–4) has argued, the 'genesis story' of Montgomery's literary career – the fact that she was popular and respected as an author during the early decades of the twentieth century, but then snubbed by the torchbearers of Canadian modernism and later scholars – is more complicated than has previously been acknowledged. Based on material published in newspapers, popular magazines and literary surveys during and after Montgomery's lifetime, Lefebvre (2013: 4, 17) maintains that Montgomery's literary fame never plummeted in the way that has often been claimed.[21] However, it is true that during the 1930s she faced some harsh critique from the male advocates – especially William Deacon – of canonised Canadian literature as predominately white, male and modernist fiction for adults (see Gerson 2002: 18).

Thus, Montgomery was highly respected as an author during her lifetime. Among her fans were Mark Twain and Earl Grey as well as Stanley Baldwin and Ramsay MacDonald (both of whom were prime ministers of Great Britain) (see Rubio 2008: 2). As Lefebvre (2013: 16) notes, during Montgomery's time the question of whether she wrote for children or for adults was never settled, and even Montgomery herself offers conflicting views on the matter in her letters and diary (see e.g. *My Dear Mr. M*: 39). Judging from the early editions of her novels, Montgomery was not originally categorised as a children's author. Her books were marketed for an adult audience,[22] and as one can notice by examining the cover art of her novels, the categorisation as a children's writer emanates only later as a joint endeavour by the

21 See for example Lefebvre (2013: 3–4), Rubio (2008: 2–4, 457–66) and Åhmansson (1991: 13–25).

22 See e.g. Gammel (2008) for the cover of the first edition of *AGG*, which features a profile image of an adult woman in the 'Gibson girl' style.

publishing market, literary criticism and book industry in general, which is common in the transition of classics becoming children's books.

The rise of second wave feminism in the 1970s caused a growing interest in female authors repudiated by the male canon and led to theories on autobiographical and diary texts with a feminist twist. During this feminist literary renaissance, Montgomery's reputation within the academia gained new momentum (see Gerson 2002: 20) and was reassessed by scholars such as Elizabeth Waterston and Mollie Gillen.[23] What was important in this literary renaissance was that it included Montgomery's autobiographical texts in the scope of study, as well as broke boundaries between 'high' and 'low' literature. As Montgomery's major sins for critics have always been the 'sentimentalism' of her fiction and the fact that she writes 'merely' for children or for girls (see e.g. Epperly 1992: 3, Lefebvre 2013: 18–19, and Tompkins 1985), the rise of feminist and autobiography studies has done much to dismantle some of these beliefs. Finally, the publication of Montgomery's journals in the 1980s brought the complexities of her personal life to the awareness of the general public, and a collection of essays published in 2005, *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery,* edited by Irene Gammel, thoroughly reviews several aspects of Montgomery's life-writing.

1.4 NARRATING I AND NARRATED I

In order to scrutinise some of the complications that arise when studying a journal text, I now discuss the autobiographical I in more detail, by focusing on the concepts of *the narrating I* and *the narrated I*. My reasons for doing so are also practical. It would be hard to analyse Montgomery's journals without acknowledging these terms, and it would be even harder to treat the journal as literature, if the concept of the 'I' of the diary was not further problematized. However, the obsession in diary writing with the self and introspection is a relatively new phenomenon. Culley (1985: 4–5) notes that genre-wise, female diarists up until the early nineteenth century must be seen as family recorders and social historians, in contrast to their later counterparts from nineteenth century onwards, whose primary subject in diary writing is the self. Culley (1985: 5) links this change with the romantic discovery of the secular self, the emergence of the private and public spheres emphasised by the industrial revolution and the advent of psychoanalytic terminology.[24]

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23 Waterston's essay 'Lucy Maud Montgomery 1874–1942' was published in 1966. Gillen's biography on Montgomery was published in 1975. The first published doctoral thesis on Montgomery's fiction appeared as late as 1991 by Gabriella Åhmansson. One of the early influential scholars was also Francis W. P. Bolger, who published *The Years Before 'Anne'* in 1974.

24 See also Fothergill's (1974: 30–35) discussion on the same topic.

Judy Simons (1990: 3) refers to the central tension of several eighteenth and nineteenth century female diarists by noting how silence and modesty were regarded female virtues, which made women turn to journal writing because of its private status. However, 'even the act of writing a diary was considered to be subversive, with its emphasis on self-aggrandisement' (Simons 1990: 3). For example, in Louisa May Alcott's journal this tension forms the main theme of the diary and there is 'a continual attempt to resist self-absorption' (Simons 1990: 108).[25]

Culley (1985: 10) goes on to summarise the main paradox of diary writing: while its goal is usually to establish self-continuity, at its heart autobiographical writing involves a dislocation from the self, that is, turning the subject into object. The author of a diary is at least supposedly simultaneously both the narrator, the narratee[26] and the main character of the text, and one can distinguish between *the narrating I* – put simply, the 'I-now' – and *the narrated I* – the 'I-then' (see Smith and Watson 2001: 58–64). These three aspects are blended in diary writing and are often hard to separate.[27] Indeed, for simplicity's sake, I sometimes employ 'narrator' in place of 'narrating I' throughout and even refer to Montgomery in place of the narrator, when it seems apt. Similarly, 'character' sometimes replaces 'narrated I', since it highlights the narrated I's close connection to a fictional character.[28] In chapters 2 and 3, the narrating I and narrated I are probed more closely, while in chapters 5 and 6, it makes more sense to occasionally equate the narrator and Montgomery.

As Smith and Watson (2001: 58) maintain, the autobiographical I is not the same as the flesh-and-blood author. They go on to point out the problems probed by the simple division of the narrating and the narrated I. According to them, this dual differentiation overlooks the complex aspects of self-narrating and they introduce a more compound model by adding a 'real' or *historical I* and an *ideological I* (Smith and Watson 2001: 58–59). While this more complex model for dividing the autobiographical I is definitely valuable on a theoretical level, I do not find it

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25 Mary McDonald-Rissanen (2008: 12) also discusses this paradox by referring to Valerie Raoul's (1989) article on the *journal intime*.

26 However, one could also argue that in diary writing the diary itself can work as a narratee, as in the 'dear diary' convention. For Culley (1985: 11), the diary may work as an audience as it is personified. See chapter 4 for further discussion on audience and the 'dear diary' convention.

27 Instead of narrating I and narrated I, Dorrit Cohn (1978) employs the terms *the narrating self* and *the experiencing self*.

28 In Fothergill's (1974: 48) opinion, 'diarists should perhaps be accorded the common status of characters in fiction'. On the other hand, Simons (1990: 203) maintains that '[t]he sort of fictional persona which ultimately emerges helps to elucidate the nature of the diary as literary genre'.

particularly useful in actual close reading or analysing a text. Smith and Watson (2001: 62) themselves note that 'the ideological "I" is at once everywhere and nowhere in autobiographical acts', thus proving how difficult it is for the readers to grasp its existence in the text. Is the 'ideological I' the same as the narrating I and/or the narrated I? The rather awkward concept could simply be replaced by the concept of author. She might not be accessible in the text, but as an author she can be examined as concerns ideological, historical and cultural issues. In fact, could not the term 'historical I' likewise be replaced by referring to the author of an autobiographical text? More important than conceptualising diverse autobiographical 'I's is separating the author from the textual narrator when analysing actual texts.[29]

Hence, on the textual level the narrating I uses strategies of narrator and narration, while the narrated I adopts the characterisation that the narrating I renders it. Sometimes the two overlap and are hard to distinguish from each other. Usually, as is often the case with Montgomery's journals, when the narration is retrospective and the narrating I describes the narrated I in the past, the two are easy to keep separate, as in this example: 'I was a funny-looking object going to school to-day. I had on a big buffalo coat' (*CJ1*: 52). Here the narrating I describes the narrated I as a 'funny looking object' under a retrospective gaze. Although the entry is narrated in the first person it would not change much if third-person narration was used ('*She* was a funny-looking object…'). According to Shari Benstock (1988: 19), definitions of autobiography that stress self-disclosure and narrative account value this kind of narration and firmly believe in the artist's conscious control over subject matter and authority in general. In her opinion, although making the self appear organic and the narrative seamless, this 'first-person actually masking the third-person' technique shuts out alternative, less coherent ways of describing the self (Benstock 1988: 19–20).

In fact, for Benstock (1988: 15), most autobiography theories, such as that of George Gusdorf, overlook the most interesting aspect of the autobiographical, 'the measure to which "self" and "self-image" might not coincide, can never coincide in language'. Indeed, in instances when the narrating I of the diary addresses herself directly, Benstock's point seems valid: 'Oh, you poor pessimist, writing in this strain because you can't write in any other just now. … Cheer up – do!' (*CJ2*: 125). Differentiating between the narrating I and the narrated I and keeping track of who

29 However, see also Löschnigg (2010: 257) in whose opinion this distinction is problematic when studying autobiographies, since 'it is prone to introduce a dichotomy which detracts from the continuity of (remembered) experience as emphasized by narrative psychology and recent theories of life-writing'.

is addressing whom becomes trickier: Is the narrated I addressing the narrating I, or is the narrating I addressing the actual author of the diary or vice versa? However, when we go beyond the textual level, the matter becomes less complicated and we can say that it is actually the author of the diary addressing and writing to herself by way of encouragement.

Benstock's reading of women's autobiographies nevertheless has its merits when studying Montgomery's journals. Benstock (1988: 15) argues that women's self-writings often exploit difference and change more than sameness and identity and have no investment in creating a cohesive self over time. Benstock does not take into consideration the question of intention, however. Exploitation of difference can take place unintentionally as well. As we shall see, while Montgomery might have striven to fabricate a cohesive autobiographical I in her journals, what surfaces are several personas or variations of the narrated I, closely connected to fictional characterisation. Simons's (1990: 12) study on diaries of other female authors proves that this tendency is a more general one.

1.5 ROMANCE AND FEMALE INTIMACY

What falls under the term *romance* and how is it understood in this dissertation? We can understand *the romance* as meaning the medieval narratives of chivalric heroes and adventures, often contrasted with the novel in the eighteenth century (see e.g. Chase 1957; Frye 1976; Beer 1970), or simply *romance* without the definitive article as a literary quality. As Gillian Beer (1970: 66) notes, '[f]rom the Romantic period onwards writers more and more abandon the article before "romance". Romance has become a literary quality rather than a form'. Elizabeth Epperly (1992: 10), who has scrutinised Montgomery's uses of romance in her fiction in *The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass: L.M. Montgomery's Heroines and the Pursuit of Romance*, points out that the terms *romance* or *romantic* have 'reasonably precise boundaries' when they refer to the above-mentioned usage, but 'blur when we begin to talk colloquially'. Indeed, in common speech, romance nowadays evokes romantic fiction, an entertaining story of romantic love, mainly targeted at women, such as chick lit, or *formula romance* such as the Harlequin series (see e.g. Cawelti 1976; Gammel 2002b: 117; Modleski 1982; Radway 1991).

Furthermore, in a broader sense, romance can also simply refer to love relationships, usually between men and women. Romance and courtship must therefore be understood within a proper historical contextualisation, in which social customs and conventions regulate how people have interacted in the romantic sense and pursued love and marriage. Ellen K. Rothman's (1984) study *Hands and*

Hearts. A History of Courtship in America, among others, is used in order to avoid an ahistorical reading. To sum up, romance works as a theme and subject matter or as a style and rhetorical device within a narrative, as is the case in Montgomery's journals.

Sometimes questions of romance connect with the literary movement of Romanticism and the Romantic period from the late eighteenth century to the Victorian period. At least in Montgomery's case, the influence of the literature of this period on her writing is central. In her journal Montgomery notes that 'I had access [in childhood] to many poets – Longfellow, Tennyson, Whittier, Scott, Byron, Milton, Burns – and as poetry was not frowned upon as fiction was I could revel in them as fully as I wished. Their music was woven into my growing soul and has echoed through it … ever since' (*CJ2*: 216). According to Epperly (1992: 10), Montgomery's ideas of love and male-female relations are also more generally marked by 'nineteenth-century conventional and literary radical thinking'. Epperly (1992: 11) continues by making an important point: Montgomery's heroines are often 'reading and rereading Victorian-Romantic poems or stories and/or current magazine formula romances' and they shape themselves and their conceptions of love in response to this romantic reading. I hope to demonstrate that this is exactly what Montgomery herself undertakes in the journals.

Christiana Salah (2013) calls attention to Montgomery's short fiction and its gothic thematics in her article 'Girls in Bonds: Prehensile Place and the Domestic Gothic in L.M. Montgomery's Short Fiction'. She observes that Montgomery's work resists easy genre categorisation (Salah 2013: 99). While mainly writing within the domestic romance genre (Epperly 1992: 57), Montgomery's novels and stories 'contain such characteristic tropes as ghosts, clairvoyance, prophetic dreams, confinement, isolation, and domestic violence' (Salah 2013: 99–100). It is safe to say that *the gothic romance*, a subgenre of romance that emerged in the late eighteenth century (see Beer 1970: 55–58), is a literary genre whose features Montgomery delights in employing not only in her fiction, but also in her journal.

Clearly, then, the literary tradition and meaning of romance is very much present when I examine the stylistic features of Montgomery's romantic relationships in the journals. Romance in the literary sense connects Montgomery's journal text to the longer romance tradition, since she draws much inspiration from Romantic poetry, but also from domestic novels and serial stories in magazines with romantic motifs. Referring to the history of this literary convention, I employ the term *conventional romance* (see also Epperly 1992: 3–14) when I mean the expected plot line of romance between man and woman that usually culminates in marriage.

More specifically, I prefer to analyse Montgomery's representation of love and romance, rather than sexuality in the journals. In my opinion, employing the term *sexuality* for textual representations – especially when dealing with autobiographical texts – can be somewhat problematic and the focus can easily slip into asking 'what really happened' instead of 'how it is represented'. Without denying that sexuality also manifests itself as a discursive construction – therefore very much present in all kinds of 'texts' – as theorised by Michel Foucault in *History of Sexuality* (1978), I think it is important to separate the historical person and the author/narrator of a text. In my opinion, textual and literary characters, as the ones that surface in Montgomery's journals of the autobiographical I, have no sexuality as such, unlike a real person, such as Montgomery the historical person. Therefore, I maintain that we should not draw conclusions of the sexuality of this historical person based on her writing, although we can definitely study how sexuality comes across on the page or is evoked textually in writing.

I wish to broaden the scope of romance to include not merely conventional romance but also romance that depicts love between women, because the importance of female friends to Montgomery's life and life-writing is paramount. Let me note that I employ the term *female intimacy* and *female romance* instead of *romantic friendship* or *lesbianism* in the dissertation. To be sure, romantic friendship, a term that was widely used about women's same-sex relationships in the nineteenth century, as Lillian Faderman (1991: 2) points out, is accurate, but somewhat evasive of the often intimate aspect of those friendships. It is also closely tied to a specific time, in other words, the Victorian era. Indeed, female intimacy covers not merely friendships but also relationships – such as that of Montgomery and her cousin Frede as presented in the journals – that entail aspects we now attribute to conventional love.

The discourse of women's close relationships changed drastically in the 1920s and 1930s, and while Montgomery was well aware of the new medicalised terminology of 'homosexual' and 'lesbian', she belonged to a generation that did not define their relationships in the dual terms of 'hetero/homosexual' (see also Katz 1995). Lesbianism is thus a questionable term to impose on a late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century text, having mainly been formulated as a term – or category, as Faderman (1991: 2, 35) notes – by early twentieth-century sexologists.

What is more, the term itself would not have been employed by mass media until about the 1920s, and even then its connotations were still pathological.[30]

My own research shows that the importance of female relationships and their textual significance might be undervalued by biographers and editors, because they do not necessarily possess tools to interpret or articulate love that does not entail a man and a woman. As Martha Vicinus (2004: xxii) points out, '[t]he slipperiness of vocabulary has contributed to our own confusion about how to define women's intimate friendships without demeaning them and their erotic content'. Furthermore, much of this denial can be attributed to what Adrienne Rich (1993: 229) calls 'compulsory heterosexuality', in which heterosexuality is understood as the norm from which all other types of relationships are seen as deviations.

In Rich's (1993: 232) opinion, heterosexuality needs to be studied as a political institution rather than a form of sexuality, including the notion of the *lesbian continuum*. She goes on to note: 'If we think of heterosexuality as *the* natural emotional and sensual inclination for women, lives [which are not mainly heterosexual] are seen as deviant, as pathological, or as emotionally and sensually deprived' (Rich 1993: 241; emphasis original). This resonates well with how Montgomery's journals and life have often been analysed. As articulated by Rich (1993: 241), heterosexual (or conventional) romance is represented as 'the great female adventure, duty and fulfilment', the obvious problem being that without this experience, female lives are not seen as adventurous or fulfilled. Thus, among the main goals of my study are reassessing the romantic story in Montgomery's life-writing as something more complex than merely the 'great female adventure' of conventional romance as well as broadening the meaning of the word romance to encompass love relationships between women.

Ironically enough, Montgomery is not a very romantic diary writer (or fiction writer) as such, for she is rarely emotional or sentimental in her writing. There is always uneasiness in her dealing with 'matters of the heart'. Although Montgomery's diary clearly owes much to the 'Romantic diary' from the late eighteenth century onwards, she is also in some respects a non-romantic writer, who might write about her emotions, but does not usually write emotionally (see Fothergill 1974: 30). Judy Simons (1990: 61, 117) refers to similar evasion in the diaries of Mary Shelley and Louisa May Alcott. According to Simons (1990: 61, 117), Shelley's diary fails to 'tell us what we want to hear about the feelings of the writer' and Alcott's journal

30 As Faderman (1991: 15) notes, for women loving other women this period of time might have been confusing: '[T]o most of those women themselves, who were on the historical cusp in this regard, the former term [romantic friendship] would have been anachronistic and the latter [lesbian] unacceptable'.

likewise ‘seems to shun privacy by deliberately avoiding all suggestion of intimate revelation’. What thus appears to be a more generic characteristic of the journals of female writers calls forth even more emphatically the examination of how Montgomery writes about love in her personal journals. Romance is, nevertheless, one of the main themes of her journals, and as combined, these two contradictory features – the uneasiness towards romance and romance as the main motif of the journals – provide the most interesting aspects of her diary writing.

CHAPTER 2

THE CHANGING RHETORIC OF ROMANCE IN THE TEENAGE ENTRIES

Approaching her fifteenth birthday, the young Prince Edward Island teenager Maud Montgomery decides to begin to keep a proper diary. She dates the first entry 'September 21, 1889' and boldly declares in the first sentence of what will become a life-long document: 'I am going to begin a new kind of diary' (*CJ1*: 3). Even here, the self-confidence and determination of a skilled writer are present. Montgomery (*CJ1*: 3) promises to 'write only when I have something worth writing about' and never to include boring descriptions of weather. Emphatically marking the break from the old-fashioned and childish childhood diary – 'I burned it to-day' (*CJ1*: 3) –, the narrator draws a line between two eras, childhood and girlhood, but also between two stylistically different texts: a strictly private diary, written for herself, more like a calendar than a diary, and a new, artistically satisfying journal, written for the sake of capturing interesting events in life, for the sake of writing as such.

'Life is beginning to get interesting for me', the young Montgomery (*CJ1*: 3) writes, and we can almost see the pleased little glimmer of a smile on her face. Life becomes interesting when you reach your teenage years, because that is when romance steps in the picture. It is thus worth noting the almost too obvious fact that Montgomery's journals arise out of the necessity to depict romance, and they continually stem from this theme. The teenage entries, but also most of the young adulthood entries, centre on romantic matters. Although covering several other themes – such as becoming a writer, being a professional author, losing one's parents and growing into a woman – Montgomery's early journals comprise her romantic autobiography where 'boy-talk' dominates.

Being a skilful writer, Montgomery would have her readers believe in the verisimilitude of these early entries. As implied in the previous paragraphs, reading the first entry of the journal, readers can see in their minds' eye the young diarist, sitting by her desk at the old Cavendish farm, dreamily gazing at her geraniums – an effect that is further strengthened by a photograph of 'the Old Home' inserted in the journal by a more mature Montgomery (see *CJ1*: 3). However, when examining the

first two volumes of Montgomery's journals that cover the years 1889–1910[31] one has to keep in mind that they do not contain the original diary entries of a 14-year-old girl or even a 35-year-old woman. Especially the entries at the beginning of the first volume may seem very private and allegedly honest – the narrated I even states in the first entry of her diary: 'I am going to keep this book locked up!!' (*CJ1*: 3) –, but they have been edited several times by the author and twice more by the editors Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, and were actually written in the extant ledgers by Montgomery in her forties, from 1919 onwards (see e.g. Devereux 2005: 243–244).

Furthermore, although the structure and style especially of the first volume is relaxed and intimate, I will demonstrate that the narrator is influenced by fictional models throughout, in accordance with Steve E. Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna's (1996: 38) observation that 'fiction and its patterns may inspire and direct a diary' and not merely vice versa.[32] Not even the first volume shares the features of a 'truly private' diary, which Lynn Z. Bloom (1996: 25–28) discusses in her essay '"I Write for Myself and Strangers" – Private Diaries as Public Documents'. Bloom's division of diaries into 'truly private' and 'public private' is merely one type of classification, but it offers a tool by which to examine the complexities of journal writing.

In order for Montgomery's teenage entries to fit the features of a 'truly private' diary there should be no concern with authorial persona, no in-depth analysis of the self or the characters, and the reader would have to rely on much extra-textual information (Bloom 1996: 25–28). In fact, the narrator reports the backgrounds and relations of other characters in some detail, as is shown in the third entry of the journal, September 24, 1889: 'Lucy is my cousin. She lives just across our field. *She* is a Macneill, too' (*CJ1*: 5; emphasis original). The style is self-reflective to the extent that the narrator comments on her own writing or directly addresses the reader, as in: '[D]ear me, if I hadn't burned all my other journals I wouldn't have to explain all over again who everybody is' (*CJ1*: 5), and, 'now, never mind who Jimmy Laird is!' (*CJ1*: 6).

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31 For convenience, I will refer to *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery. The PEI Years, 1889–1900* (2012), which includes all of the original entries from the first volume (1889–1897) of Montgomery's handwritten ledgers and part of the beginning of the second volume (1897–1910), and to *The Complete Journals of L.M. Montgomery. The PEI Years, 1901–1911* (2013), which includes the rest of the second ledger volume and the beginning of the third (1910–1916). However, the omissions in *The Selected Journals* 1 and 2 (covering the years 1889–1921) should still be borne in mind, since they have affected the understanding of Montgomery's early diary entries until very recently.

32 Bunkers and Huff (1996b: 1) also discuss the close connection of diary with other genres by stating that '[the diary's] form, simultaneously elastic and tight, borrows from and at the same time contributes to other narrative structures'.

It is probable that most of such comments, which continue throughout the diary, were added when Montgomery edited her journals. They read as extra-textual elements, almost like editorial commentary that explains and exemplifies the diary text. After all, the most crucial thing to remember about Montgomery's journals is that it is not known whether and how much she changed the original diaries when copying them into the extant ledgers, or whether she rewrote everything, and if so, how many times. In fact, the only verifiable fact is that Montgomery did edit the journals and that the dates of the entries might have nothing to do with the actual writing time. Indeed, reading the journals with this in mind, it is possible to start noticing which sentences and paragraphs the older Montgomery added when copying, writing, re-writing and editing her old journals. Often they are sentences that explain or add factual information to an otherwise authentic-sounding entry, such as 'Max [a cat] is up on the table bothering me fearfully. … *I do love cats. I have another named Topsy*' (*CJ1*: 16; italics mark the sentence that might have been added), or whole paragraphs of biographical information and mature-sounding commentary and nostalgia, which could be easily added at the end of an entry.[33]

As Devereux (2005: 246) notes, Montgomery's journals can be seen as the exertion of the desire for control. Montgomery wrote very much with the future public in mind and shaped the text according to how she wished to be regarded (see Devereux 2005: 246). In an entry of July 31, 1902, Montgomery (*CJ2*: 59), anticipating a long stay away from home, declares: 'I shall take my worries and problems … my white nights and pale days, and lock them away in a deep place in my soul. And I shall put on light-heartedness and frivolity as a garment'. The determinate statement is echoed as a kind of motto in the teenage and early adulthood entries, since the tone of writing is definitely light-hearted and even frivolous. This kind of adaptation, says Bloom (1996: 23), is typical of 'all diarists who conceive of an audience external to themselves'.

The blithe tone extends to the depiction of romance in the teenage entries. As the editors of Montgomery's journals Rubio and Waterston (2012: xi) note in their introduction to the first volume of *The Complete Journals*, one of the main storylines in the first two journal volumes is the teenage Montgomery discovering flirtation, sexuality and finally at a more advanced age, marriage. The focus of this chapter is thus the early romantic encounters with boys and men and the surprisingly unromantic voice that is used in depicting them, which perseveres throughout the journals. Whether the teenage entries present 'a detailed anatomy

33 See for instance February 27, 1890, *CJ1*: 23; December 26, 1889, *CJ1*: 13; and July 1, 1890, *CJ1*: 32.

of feminine response to male courtship' (Rubio and Waterston 2012: xi) remains to be seen, but what is certain is that the highly edited account of Montgomery's early romances employs fictional means to shape the image of the unromantic heroine and her attitude to love.

2.1 FICTIONAL MODELS AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL I IN THE TEENAGE ENTRIES

In order to demonstrate the artistic nature of Montgomery's journals and to convince gullible readers (including myself) that even the teenage entries are an example of accomplished workmanship, I will first consider Montgomery's early journal entries and their fictional precursors. Most of the entries in Montgomery's journals are artfully composed entailing features of prose fiction such as dialogue, scene setting, characterisation and plot construction. In an entry of August 13, 1891 – when Montgomery was 17 – the narrator acknowledges that she is using the journal to capture interesting material for future fiction: 'If ever I write a novel I must put that scene in' (*CJ1*: 87). Whether this comment was actually written by the 17-year-old teenager or the world-famous author cannot be known, but by foreshadowing the diarist's future literary fame – common knowledge to the journal's possible audience – it adds a nice touch to this sophisticated and literary journal. In other words, Montgomery's journal writing is akin to fiction writing. Not only will she borrow scenes from the diary for her novels, and even word-for-word sections, she writes and edits her journal like it was a novel about her own life.

While the connections of Montgomery's fiction to her life and life-writing are well known, not much research has been done on the fictionality and fictionalisation of the journals. As Margaret Turner (1994: 94) notes in her essay on Montgomery's autobiographical process, Montgomery's 'journalizing is a specific literary act'. Turner (1994: 94) goes on to remind us that the journals cannot be read as 'spontaneous, immediate, and simple notations of daily life and domestic detail', as women's diaries have sometimes been read, but as a specific autobiographical text with its own aesthetic function.

By *fictionalisation* I do not mean connections to fiction *per se*, but rather the extent to which the text in the journal uses narrative patterns and aspects typical of fiction. It should be emphasised that the term does not entail that factual text is turned into fictional, that is, unreal or invented, as in the content of Montgomery's journals being completely fictional. Rather, the focus is on the way of writing and the way of reading a diary text. Employing the term *fictionalisation* in place of other

possible coinages – such as 'aspects typical of fictional writing' or 'journalizing', which is the term Montgomery used of her diary writing[34] – emphasises the diary's literariness rather than its historical and biographical characteristics. As Fothergill (1974: 2) notes in his study on English diaries: 'If the language can be found for treating diaries as books rather than as people, it will be possible to see diary-writing as a complex genre'. My attempt here, however, is not to define the characteristics and markers of diary as a genre, but to read a particular journal text as literature, closely related to and dependent on other literary genres.

The problem with the term *fictionalisation* is clearly that not all diaries draw inspiration merely from fictional written texts or prose fiction (the novel being the most dominant source), but even in Montgomery's case, the extra-textual models for writing can be as diverse as oral storytelling, the Bible, hymns, sermons, fairy tales, song lyrics and poetry.[35] However, when studying the writing processes of Montgomery's journals, fictionalisation is the term that most accurately depicts what takes place on the page and results in a certain type of text: writing autobiographical non-fictional material in a way that is mainly typical of fictional writing.

Fictionalisation also shows what can easily be forgotten when reading a diary: that all story-telling, even 'the story of one's life', is narrating and uses similar rhetorical strategies.[36] In a genre that is generally regarded as factual rather than fictional, readers are usually not so accustomed to paying attention to features such as characterisation and plot construction, which are in turn more easily recognised and expected in a fictional text. As a general tendency, even within academia, diaries have not been analysed and read in the same way as fictional texts, but they definitely can be. Following Fothergill's (1974: 2) plea to read diaries as books rather than as people – in other words, not to read them merely as 'a manifestation of the writer's personality' but as literature –, I employ the term *fictionalisation* in order to highlight this kind of analysis. Martin Löschnigg (2010: 256) mentions that in the theory of autobiography, however, 'the distinction between fact and fiction no longer seems to be the overriding concern that it was until relatively recently'. According to Löschnigg (2010: 256), this 'relaxation of the borders between truth

34 Turner (1994: 94) importantly notes that Montgomery's 'journalizing' is a 'complex process of re-reading and re-writing, an act rather than a form'.

35 See also for instance Anna Kuismin's (2013) work on the nineteenth-century diaries of unschooled Finnish people.

36 Fothergill (1974: 63) also reminds us that 'diarists do think of themselves as engaged in the composition of a book – a book with special conventions and disciplines to which they more or less consistently, more or less consciously adhere'.

and fiction' correlates with the view that autobiography, 'in narrative terms, stages the drama of creating the autobiographer's identity', which happens to a high degree also in diaries.

As I have noted, different types of diaries have diverse ways of fictionalising and no generalisations should be drawn on the basis of the analysis of Montgomery's journals. In general, the question of the writer's social class and level of education is of essence, as is the dizzying array of diverse types of diaries, from the highly literary and lengthy ones to the sparse and matter-of-fact kind. As Kagle and Gramegna (1996: 39) state, often the model for fictionalisation is found in acknowledged fictional genres, which in turn assumes that the diarist is familiar with various literary forms.[37]

Thus, fictionalisation as a term already assumes as its object a sophisticated literary journal and a well-read diarist, such as Montgomery, and would not work so well with other types of diaries, such as the private diaries of people who were literate but not necessarily well-read. Indeed, one feature of the 'public private' type of diaries, which include a wider scope and range of topics as well as greater variation in form and technique (Bloom 1996: 28–29), is that the writer is usually well acquainted with literary models. As Bunkers (1988: 193) points out, the greater the economic resources available to the diarist, 'the greater her opportunity for education, the greater her ease with writing, her familiarity with texts that might serve as models, her free time for writing, and her money for writing materials'.

Liz Stanley (1992: 14) highlights autobiography's intertextual character by pointing out how our understanding of 'lives' and their becoming 'written lives' is gained from written auto/biographies, including fictional ones. It is not merely 'life as it is lived' (Stanley 1992: 14) that is the starting-point of life-writing, but fiction and narrativity alike. Montgomery is no exception to the rule: she devoured biographies and autobiographies throughout her life, and mentions in her journal having read for instance George Eliot's and Charlotte Brontë's biographies (see e.g. *CJ1*: 289; *CJ2*: 339, *SJ3*: 204), among others. As Emily Woster (2014: 201–202) notes in her essay on the *autobibliographical* practises of Montgomery, Montgomery's reading is 'central to her journaling and autobiographical expression'.

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37 Montgomery was more than familiar with all kinds of fiction; she was well-read even as a teenager, although the variety of novels available to her at her grandparents' house was limited (see *CJ2*: 258). Poetry of the Romantic school, fairy tales and religious texts were more readily available (McDonald-Rissanen 2001: 82). Montgomery's private library – now stored in the University of Guelph Archives – contains 175 items. For a detailed discussion on the kind of literature Montgomery read when growing up, see Rubio (2008: 41–44, 52– 54) and Epperly (1992: 4–5).

Montgomery also read Samuel Pepys' influential diaries (*SJ2*: 210, *SJ5*: 51, 57) and the sensational French diary of Marie Bashkirtseff published in 1887. Montgomery refers to Bashkirtseff's diary in a journal entry dated June 6, 1924: 'This evening I was reading *The Diary of Marie Bashkirtseff*. This book came out when I was a young girl and made a tremendous sensation. … I longed to read it but books like that never penetrated to Cavendish and I could not afford to buy it' (*SJ3*: 187; see also UJ6: 130–132). Bashkirtseff's diary was only the second French diary by a female writer to be published (see e.g. Lejeune 1996: 118–119),[38] and although Montgomery did not read it when it was first published in English in 1889, the publicity around the book must have influenced the decision to begin her own 'new kind of diary' (*CJ1*: 3) in the same year. Indeed, Judy Simons (1990: 1) notes that Bashkirtseff's diary started 'something of a vogue for intimate confessional reminiscences among well-bred young women with imaginative aspirations'. Published diaries, among autobiographies and biographies, are thus important models for life-writing.[39]

In fact, it could be claimed that Montgomery's diary is closer to an autobiography, or what Fothergill (1974: 153–154) terms *serial autobiography*. According to Fothergill (1974: 153, 7), diaries of the type of a serial autobiography cover 'the significant years of the writer's life' and give to their contents 'the literary character of "A Life"', in other words, these types of diaries assume 'an autobiographical consciousness on the part of the writer' and 'certain formal characteristics in the resulting book'. Whether or not Montgomery's journal should be seen as a serial autobiography or 'simply' as a diary, it remains apparent that fictionalisation is more common in diaries that share features with formal autobiographies.

To give a more specific example of what I mean by fictionalisation in Montgomery's case, the question of style should be considered. We are all familiar with the 'diary style' that recounts events in the diarist's life, often but not always, in the first-person narrative in the present or past tense. This type of genre expectation does not mean that all diaries are actually like this, but it demonstrates what I mean by a diary text that is not fictionalised. In the common 'diary style', a diarist could write, for instance: 'I went to the ball and had a lovely time' or 'It snowed today'. This is writing that does not embellish or fictionalise, but simply depicts what happened

38 The first one was the diary of Eugénie de Guérin published in 1862 (see e.g. Lejeune 1996: 115).

39 Fothergill (1974: 123) mentions that Katherine Mansfield's early diaries were also inspired by Bashkirtseff's published one.

(obviously, the diarist can still lie and distort the truth or not tell everything). What happens in a diary written in a 'fictional style', such as Montgomery's journal, is that the evening in a ball is turned into a scene with dialogue and main characters, which is significant in the journal's overall structure. Respectively, a snowy day could be made to represent a certain mood or event and thus evoke a symbolic level.

Moreover, as all of the journal entries, even the teenage ones, were actually written and/or rewritten by a middle-aged Montgomery from 1919 onwards, they need to be read with an eye for the original material and Montgomery's development as a diary writer as well as for the edited material composed by the introspective middle-aged/elderly Montgomery. This double vision is needed in order to appreciate the complexities of Montgomery's journals and to analyse them as thoroughly as possible, but it is also of help in reading the text, since perusing the diary without succumbing to the illusion of its 'naturalness' is rather difficult. Whether seen as a tyranny of sequentially dated entries, or as the natural order of Montgomery's writing, the diary format and its connection to historical realities should not be ignored.

The notion of fictionalisation also ties in with that of audience. Montgomery intended her journal to be eventually published and saw it as a hybrid between autobiography and diary (see e.g. *SJ5*: 120, 376).[40] Montgomery's assumed audience, then, was right from the start external, including her future audience(s) both private – her sons and grandchildren – and public – her readers –, but also internal, including the diary itself as a personification and a friend[41] and her past, present and future selves. The peculiarity of the diary genre is evident in all of these various audiences to Montgomery's journal writing.[42] As Fothergill (1974: 95) importantly points out, 'the diary, unlike most forms of communications, creates its own reader as a projection of the impulse to write'. Furthermore, as with the many audiences and readers of Montgomery's journals mentioned above, 'whether identified as a listening friend, future generations, or God … the reader is literally a figment of the writer's mind' (Fothergill 1974: 96). Finally, as Bloom (1996: 24) summarises, the

40 According to Fothergill (1974: 153) this is a common feature of many serial autobiographies: 'As an autobiographer a diarist sets a standard for himself – ill-defined, perhaps, and fluctuating – but nonetheless an external conception of the requirements of the genre.' Re publishing, Fothergill (1974: 33; emphasis original) mentions that by the nineteenth century 'few serious diarists any longer write in the certainty that they will *not* be published, posthumously at least'. Furthermore, as an important addition, one should remember that the urge to publish a diary 'comes not from personal vanity but from the recognition that a book has been in gestation' (Fothergill 1974: 45).

41 Montgomery (*CJ2*: 131) calls her diary in the July 30, 1905 entry 'this dear old journal, which I love as if it were a living friend'.

42 Fothergill (1974: 95) lists three types of addressees in diary writing: an actual recipient (such as in a letter), 'the public' and a certain kind of responsiveness.

presence of an audience requires accommodation through the same textual features that transform private diaries into public documents.

With the early 'truly private' diary that she started keeping when she was nine years old and later destroyed, Montgomery was able to rehearse the conventions of keeping a diary, including the realisation of how a possible audience affects diary writing. The narrator of the later, extant journal notes in the August 1, 1892 entry: 'Since I was nine I had kept a childish diary – long ago committed to the flames – in which all my small transactions were faithfully recorded every day. I was always in a state of chronic terror lest someone – the boys in particular – should see it' (*CJ1*: 139).[43] 'The boys' refer to two orphan boys, Wellington and David Nelson, who boarded with Montgomery and her grandparents for three years in her childhood. Clearly, the little diarist is aware of the possibility that the diary might be read by outsiders, that is, her playmates. Interestingly enough, the narrator goes on to note that 'one winter Well began to keep a diary also and in his turn would never let me see it although of course I was devoured with curiosity' (*CJ1*: 139). Right from the non-extant childhood diary, then, Montgomery's life-writing is with or for someone. Not even the first 'truly private' childhood diary was such a lonely endeavour with Well and Dave as its possible audience and Well as a competitor in diary writing.

In fact, Jennifer H. Litster (2005: 97) mentions that already when keeping her childhood diary Montgomery was influenced by a literary example: Metta Victor's *A Bad Boy's Diry* (1880; spelling original), 'a comic catalogue of mischief purportedly written by "little Gorgie"', the first of a popular series (*SJ1*: 402). An echo of this early influence is still present in the extant journal, for instance in the February 13, 1894 entry, where the narrator quotes the book: '"Oh, mi dere diry," as saith the famous "Bad Boy"' (*CJ1*: 190). Thus its effect stretches a long way and offers a good example of how even the most private type of diary writing can make use of fictional models, which, in turn, might even initiate the keeping of a diary.

When working as an editor in a newspaper office in Halifax, Montgomery dedicates a whole entry – May 12, 1902 – to the influential *A Bad Boy's Diry* and reports to the readers of her current journal how it all 'came to be':

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43 Here, too, we can hear the voice of the 40-year-old or older Montgomery, probably writing this long entry about her childhood when copying the journals into the ledgers. Consider for instance the fact that the narrator refers to the childhood diary as 'long ago committed to the flames' (*CJ1*: 139), although according to the date of the entry, August 1, 1892, the diary was burnt only three years before (see the first entry of the journals, September 21, 1889, *CJ1*: 3). From the perspective of 1919 and onwards, the non-extant childhood diary would indeed seem a far-off affair.

> Today I've laughed more than I've done for a month together. I've been reading 'A Bad Boy's Diry'. That book is responsible for *you*, my journal. 'Twas from it I first got the idea of keeping a 'diry.' … The 'bad boy' was, of course, my model. He spelled almost every word wrong; therefore so did I of malice prepense. He was always in mischief and wrote accounts of it in his diary. Although not very mischievous by nature, being bookish and dreamy, nevertheless I schemed and planned many naughty tricks for no other reason than that I might have them to write in my 'dere diry'. (*CJ2*: 54; emphasis and spelling original)

It is noteworthy how much the fictional diary novel affects young Montgomery's diary writing, so much so that the little diarist alters her character in order to make the diary more interesting. Her behaviour conforms to the expectations of diary writing as being based on factual events. Instead of merely inventing naughty tricks in writing, little Maud actually behaves as little Georgie in order to create a similar diary.

Litster (2005: 98) states that for her juvenile diary Montgomery constructed an alternative identity for her diary-self based on a literary model. In other words, already at an early age Montgomery consciously wrote with fictional narrative patterns and influences in mind, which is not surprising considering her long career as a diarist already in childhood.[44] The entry of May 12, 1902 is interesting also because it entails concrete information on the materialisation of the early diary: 'I folded and cut and sewed four sheets of foolscap into a book and covered it with red paper. On the cover I wrote "Maud Montgomery's Diry"' (*CJ2*: 54). Even the child diarist is aware of the conventions of diary writing and gives a title to her diary, thus bestowing on it a book-like appearance. The childhood diary is also discussed in the long autobiographical entry of January 7, 1910, in which Montgomery reminisces her childhood: '[W]hen I was about fourteen I burned all the "note book" diaries I had kept – something I shall always regret having done. They were quaint little documents, as I remember them – quaint and naive and painfully truthful and sincere, whether I wrote of my own doings or of others' (*CJ2*: 259).

One of the earliest direct references to fictional models in the extant journal is to the then popular Pansy Books that entailed religious moral stories mainly for girls.[45] Even the teenage entries of the journal construct alternative personas of

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44 By the time she begins the extant journal, the 14-year-old Montgomery had kept a diary for almost six years.

45 'Pansy' was the pseudonym of Isabella Macdonald Alden (1841–1930). As Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen (*After Green Gables*: 100) note, Alden wrote nearly a hundred books between 1865 and 1929, which were 'didactic fiction, heavily salted with religious principles'. According to the Tiessens (*After Green Gables*: 100), the books were a staple in many Sunday School libraries and enormously popular during the late nineteenth century.

the autobiographical I. In the December 14, 1890 entry, the narrator describes a scene where the narrated I is forced to teach a Sunday-school class of small girls: 'I did so with a great deal of inward "sinking awayness." My class … had a fearful knack of asking awkward and irrelevant questions. It all seemed like a chapter out of a "Pansy" book – but I did not feel at all like a "Pansy" heroine!' (*CJ1*: 56). The style of narration is rather self-reflective. The narrating I observes both the events and the narrated I as things that can be shaped by writing and compared to fiction. Furthermore, the narrator notices that she can use fictional story patterns to her advantage – and insert them into her diary – but also thwart and reshape them.

In the above example, the narrated I is presented as a complete antithesis to the proper Christian girls of the Pansy Books. By adding humorous and ironic touches to the sentimental story patterns, Montgomery subverts the roles reserved for young girls – a technique that reaches its apex in the secret diary written by Montgomery and her friend Nora Lefurgey (see chapter 4). This is already an advanced use of fictional models. Whereas in the childhood diary Montgomery altered her own persona to match that of the fictional model, the naughty 'Bad boy', in the later journals fictional models are reshaped to match the effect the diary writer wishes to accomplish.

Several of the teenage entries resemble sketches for scenes in a novel in terms of their artistic composition. The narrator also has a sharp eye for the rules of drama. In the entry of November 13, 1889, the narrating I depicts the major event of having been escorted home for the first time. In it, one can find a hero, Snip, two heroines, Montgomery and her friend, villains in the form of two other schoolgirls and a proper dramatic structure with conflict, rising action, climax, dénouement and even some kind of catharsis at the end. The entry is also mainly based on dialogue, as in this excerpt:

> At the top of the hill Neil turned in at his own gate. Snip also turned in at his, but said to us as he did so,
> 'I don't suppose there will be any *white horses* on the road tonight, will there?'
> 'No, I guess not,' I said. 'If I thought there would be I'd go with you,' he said.
> Mollie laughed and I said, 'No necessity' but Snip said meditatively,
> 'I guess I'll go anyhow.'
> 'He's coming,' whispered Mollie excitedly.
> And come he did, right home with us. (*CJ1*: 8; emphasis original)

Most fictionalised scenes in the diary – such as the one above – are usually connected to the theme of romance. The November 13, 1889 entry begins the tale of Montgomery's romantic entanglement with a school-time sweetheart, Nate Lockhart, or 'Snip', who is discussed in a greater detail in the next subchapter. The entry's highly literary composition emphasises the significance of this very first romantic scene in the journals. It opens and introduces the romance theme in the journals, and therefore Montgomery does not hide its poignancy.

Years later, in a journal entry of February 6, 1911, the narrator returns to pondering on the momentousness of having 'an escort home' (*CJ2*: 359) by stating that 'when I was a little girl at school I, and all the other little girls thought it a very wonderful event to have someone to "see you home"' (*CJ2*: 360). She goes on to claim that simply having an escort home was 'dazzling' and 'incredible' (*CJ2*: 360). No wonder, then, that the scene of being escorted home by a boy for the first time is depicted in such detail and at length.[46] Such is the relevance of teenage beaux that the topic is also discussed in the long autobiography of January 7, 1910, written before Montgomery married and moved away from her beloved island.[47]

The narrator remarks that the narrated I and her two cousins, Stella and Clara Campbell, each had 'two or three "beaux" who "saw us home"' (*CJ2*: 275), utilising the parole of a bygone era marked by inverted commas. In a backward-glancing and slightly moralistic tone, the narrator 'blushes' to think 'how much we talked about those boys and how large a share "he said" and "he did" played in our conversation' (*CJ2*: 276). She then draws a rather generalising conclusion by stating that 'it seems a sort of phase in natural development which few girls escape' (*CJ2*: 276). Here the voice of Mrs. Macdonald is definitely heard, the minister's wife of a small country village who caters for her congregation and tries to downplay the image of her earlier flirtatious self. Furthermore, the topic is once again returned to in the February 6, 1911 entry, in which the narrator compares in a nostalgic tone the narrated I (Montgomery was 37 at the time) to a fifteen-year-old girl, who has her first 'escort home': 'Hers was the face of one upon whom the cachet of young ladyhood has been conferred' (*CJ2*: 359). These examples demonstrate how Montgomery creates romantic significance around certain events and how they keep reappearing throughout the journals.

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46 The second time this happens is described in the following entry of November 23, 1889 (*CJ1*: 9–10).

47 It is likely, however, that Montgomery wrote this long autobiography of her life up to that point much later, when she was preparing the ledgers and already knew what was going to happen.

With this intertwining of examining the older Montgomery editing her journal and reading for the general development of the diarist, what can be said about the formation of the autobiographical self in the first volumes? To begin with, inner contemplations are still rare in the first handwritten volume and longer, psychologically more profound entries begin appearing only towards the second volume, where Montgomery's first unhappy engagement to her cousin Edwin Simpson and the thirteen years she lived in isolation with her ailing grandmother are depicted. Montgomery herself acknowledges this lack of depth in the first entry of the third handwritten volume, February 11, 1910, noting that 'the first volume seems – I think – to have been written by a rather shallow girl, whose sole aim was to "have a good time" and who thought of little else than the surface play of life' (*CJ2*: 286). The narrator addresses her worry that 'a stranger perusing these journals would receive from them a quite misleading impression of my real character and life' (*CJ2*: 286). Whether this entry was actually written in 1910 or later directly into the handwritten ledgers is not known, but it is interesting to note that the impact of the diary's style on its possible readers is overtly discussed and that the narrator is supposedly worried that the readers will misunderstand the 'real' character of the diary's author.

The 'shallow girl' that Montgomery refers to surfaces in the teenage entries in which the narrator uses the collective pronoun 'we' instead of 'I'. The depiction of a visit by a childhood girlfriend, Mollie (Amanda Macneill), on September 12, 1891 provides a good example: 'After tea we put on our hats, linked our arms and sallied forth in old time fashion. … We loitered around familiar spots for awhile and talked over old times' (*CJ1*: 99). The style is reminiscent of schoolgirl fiction where girls are each other's close companions and everybody has their 'bosom friend', as Anne in Montgomery's fiction puts it. Here the narrated I is described as being one with her best friend, as events and even feelings are shared and collective and the most important thing is 'the surface play of life'.

This collective way of narrating culminates in the joint diary Montgomery kept with her friend Nora Lefurgey in 1903, but it is also dependent on the personal journal's audience. Although this 'best friends' style almost completely vanishes from the journal after the first few volumes, its occasional appearances are always connected to communal writing, in other words, when the diarist writes in the presence or for the perusal of someone. It occurs for instance with the Campbell girls, who were Montgomery's first cousins; with Mary Campbell, whom Montgomery boards with during her college year; and also with her friends Laura and Will

Pritchard, during the year Montgomery spends in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.[48]

Furthermore, it should be remembered that the style of the volumes is not by any means the result of unconscious writing. As Montgomery organised and edited the material of the early journals, she made conscious choices in order to create certain development in the main character and to establish a dramatic structure in the journal. Several themes and techniques – such as the narrated I's growth from a shallow teenager to a more serious woman – are evident even in the early entries. Throughout the journal text one can sense the older Montgomery's critical gaze, judging the journal as a whole.

Thus, while Montgomery's claim that the first volume is written by a shallow girl is to some extent true – the narrating I concentrates on describing events and other people rather than the narrated I –, the main character of the journal, the autobiographical I, is definitely characterised right from the beginning, even if the style is colloquial. The narrator states, for instance: 'I don't like arithmetic. … But I like writing compositions' (*CJ1*: 6). Even the first journal entry of September 21, 1889, discussed in the beginning of this chapter, resembles an introduction to an autobiography.[49] Most of the early teenage entries create an image of a character called Maud Montgomery, who happens to be the author of the diary. This is the mark of a mature writer, according to Bloom (1996: 30), since the narrator is able to 'distance herself as author from herself as a character'.

By the 25th entry and second year of journal writing, a brief biographical note is provided in the February 27, 1890 entry: 'My mother died when I was a baby. I have always lived with Grandpa and Grandma Macneill. Father is away out west in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He is married again. … I have always had a good home here but sometimes it is very lonesome' (*CJ1*: 23). Appearing at the end of an entry, the location and contents of this extract raise suspicions of Montgomery adding it to the journal ledger later. As most of the explanatory passages appear towards the end of a given entry, the occasional self-reflective tone and the conscious creation of an autobiographical self in the first handwritten volume can be said to be the work of the older Montgomery, assembling her serial autobiography in the form of a diary in 1919 onwards. Nevertheless, even without providing much overt commenting, the first teenage entries manage to paint the portrait of a character who is dreamy,

48 During the time that Montgomery visits Laurel Hill, the home farm of Laura and Will, it is evident that she either shows or reads aloud what she has written in her journal to Laura (see e.g. *CJ1*: 79–82).

49 Fothergill (1974: 66) mentions that beginning a diary often prompts the diarist to 'make a little speech'. In other words, it is common to find 'in those diaries which have a definite beginning and do not merely emerge, a formal statement of intent included in the opening entry' (Fothergill 1974: 66).

nature-loving and bookish, albeit popular with her peers and who has lots of 'chums'. This highlights how even seemingly simple diary writing is involved in the process of creating a persona, as Culley has noted (1985: 12).

The more profound and self-analytical style in the journals occurs simultaneously with a growing and self-conscious use of literary models, which is hardly a coincidence and proves how closely intertwined the creation of the autobiographical I and fictionalisation are. When Montgomery spends a year in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, between 1890 and 1891, reunited with her father and visiting his new family consisting of a stepmother and three half-siblings, the portrayal of the narrated I becomes thoroughly influenced by literary models and provides a good example of how subtly fictionalisation works in Montgomery's journals. Drawing inspiration from the well-known fairy tale Cinderella, the narrated I is depicted as a lonely and badly treated heroine suffering in the grips of an unjust stepmother.[50]

Montgomery intensely disliked her father's new wife, Mary McRae Montgomery, and in order to portray this dislike as effectively as possible, the narrator employs the familiar fairy tale to evoke sympathy in the journal's readers. The narrated I is allotted the role of the enduring and modest heroine of Cinderella, who works without complaining while the evil stepmother mistreats her by favouring her own children. For example, the stepmother is described using 'cutting' and 'insulting' tone of voice and giving the narrated I 'the *blackest* look' (*CJ1*: 42; emphasis original).

In the entry of August 23, 1890 the narrator skilfully combines all the main elements of the fairy tale. 'The loving father', 'the vicious stepmother' and 'the wrongly treated heroine' are all found within this entry. The father is '*such* a darling. His eyes just *shine* with love when he looks at me', while the stepmother is 'sulky, jealous, underhanded, and *mean*' (*CJ1*: 42–43; emphases original). The narrator admits that 'I came here prepared to love her warmly and look upon her as a real mother, but I fear it will prove impossible' (*CJ1*: 42). She goes on to note that 'I have been as nice and respectful to her [the stepmother] as I could be but already I find myself disliking and fearing her' (*CJ1*: 43), thus emphasising the narrated I's heroic nature.[51]

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50 See Cawelti (1976: 42) on the Cinderella formula, in which a poor girl falls in love with a rich or aristocratic man. However, in Montgomery's case, the formula is not a romantic one, but focuses on the relationship between 'Cinderella' (Montgomery) and the stepmother.

51 Part of Mrs Montgomery's supposed reservation about her step-daughter might be explained by the fact that in 1891 she was only 27 years old, while Montgomery was sixteen. Suddenly living with her husband's daughter from a previous marriage, only eleven years her junior, must have been challenging.

The narrated I is furthermore linked to Cinderella by the way the stepmother makes her do all the household work and even prevents her from going to school. In the April 27, 1891 entry, the narrator does not find the need to hold her tongue anymore when describing the situation:

> I work my fingers to the bone for her and her children and I am not even civilly treated for it. I do all the work of this house, except the washing, which she gets in a squaw to do. … I *love* it when father and I are alone together for a meal. We can be as jolly and chummy as we like then, with no one to cast black looks and sneers at us. (*CJ1*: 67; emphasis original).

The voice here is rather that of an angry, more realistically voiced Cinderella than of the classic fairy tale. The wicked stepmother works as the assumed audience in the Prince Albert entries, as the narrator claims she is 'constantly afraid she [the stepmother] will sometime find and read this journal, although I keep it locked up' (*CJ1*: 49).

The angry entries boldly echo the narrator's hurt feelings and defiance towards her stepmother and they seem to be addressed to her nemesis in that they articulate everything the narrator is unable to say to her stepmother. In fact, so strong is this hatred and so credible the portrayal of it that in an entry fifteen years later, May 21, 1905, the narrating I still states: 'My resentment of her [Mrs Montgomery's] treatment of me is as deep and bitter as it ever was – my memory of it as vivid!' (*CJ2*: 130). One might add that the vivid memory is thoroughly influenced by the version in the journals, since in the same entry the narrator mentions having re-read the part written in Prince Albert.

Reminiscence is thus clearly influenced by journal writing and reading and vice versa. Copying, rewriting and re-reading affects the way Montgomery views her own journal and then henceforth writes in it. As Turner (1994: 95) notes, 'this re-living/re-reading/re-writing points to an extremely complex emotional, psychological, and literary process'. Going over the entries from 1919 – the time Montgomery was copying her early diaries – we can find numerous instances where the narrator reminisces and reshapes older events after having recalled them through the copying process (see also Turner 1994: 95).[52] Furthermore, in the entry of May 21, 1905 in which the narrator mentions having re-read the Prince Albert entries, she

52 See for instance the long entry of September 3, 1919 (*SJ2*: 341–342; UJ4: 441–446). In the previous entry of September 2, 1919, Montgomery notes: 'I find that when I am copying those old journals I feel as if I had gone back into the past and were living over again the events and emotions of which I write. It is very delightful and a little sad' (*SJ2*: 341).

concludes, 'I should never read old records. … [B]ut I know I shall continue to do so at intervals' (*CJ2*: 130). Culley (1985: 13) notes how women from all periods read and re-read their diaries, which according to her 'renders the self-construction and reconstruction even more complex'.

Going over the 'metaphors of self' (see Olney 1972), the diarist orders and reshapes both the memory of events and herself as written, which Montgomery undertakes regularly and self-consciously. In a long entry of May 3, 1908, the narrator states: 'Of late I have been reading over this foolish old journal from the first and seeing the effect all my various experiences have had on me much more clearly than when I lived them' (*CJ2*: 185). She then goes on to provide an autobiographical sketch of her life inspired by reading about the events in the diary, added later.[53] The diarist is prone to introspection especially after having read over her journal and having been aided in seeing the effect of her experiences 'more clearly'. Reading over the journals affects the way Montgomery writes about her life in and this is in fact where the re-narration process begins.

In her journal Montgomery does not always openly support the view that as a diary writer she is influenced by fictional prototypes. Returning to her year in Prince Albert in the long entry of January 7, 1910, the narrator asserts that 'the many stories I had read of "cruel stepmothers" had not infected my mind at all' (*CJ2*: 269), although it is clear that these stories are the canvas for the entries in which the stepmother is discussed.[54] It is pivotal to notice that no matter what the author insists, everything that is written in Montgomery's journals is a matter of composition – not merely the capturing of life. In the May 8, 1909 entry the narrator boldly declares: 'I do not want to "make" this journal any particular sort or kind' (*CJ2*: 223). Still, the author/narrator of a diary can claim one thing and do another.

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53 The entry appears towards the end of the second handwritten manuscript. Longer, back-glancing entries usually surface at the end of the ledgers, which denotes their value as separate entities and documents. The purpose of the long entries was also practical: Montgomery needed to fill the space in each ledger, 500 paginated pages in total. Rubio (2008: 275) notes how each of the ten handwritten journal ledgers took a shape of its own as Montgomery wrote them and they are thus books in their own right.

54 In a re-written entry of November 20, 1894, three years after Montgomery's year in Prince Albert, the narrator mentions a Christmas concert in which the narrated I participates (*CJ1*: 250; UJ1: 340). One of the dialogues that Montgomery performs in is 'Cinderella'. The editors of *The Complete Journals* note that Montgomery played one of the sisters (*CJ1*: 250).

2.2 FIGHTING AGAINST IT: EARLY ROMANCES

During the first years of journalising, Montgomery's diary captures the narrated I flirting with schoolmates and even includes a love letter – inserted in the edited version at a later date. Right from the beginning, a subtly crafted image emerges of a young heroine who has an ironic voice and a matter-of-fact attitude to love. What is interesting in these early schoolgirl romances is that they offer glimpses to the way Montgomery begins constructing a romantic character and a romantic tale in her journal. Nowhere is Montgomery's need to control the versions of truth as obvious as when she depicts love. The ten journal volumes contain relatively few emotional responses to love affairs and while mentions of suitors, beaux and romantic encounters such as proposals are plentiful, they mostly lack feeling, especially romantic feeling.

Some of the entries that depict romance might to some extent mirror Montgomery's attitude towards love – which is often evasive and uncomfortable, at least when it comes to conventional romance –, but more importantly they mirror the way she wanted to be perceived posthumously. Many of the romance entries are rewritten and replaced by new pages in the original journal ledgers, which is a telling fact in itself, since the removed pages are the only concrete evidence of an entry having actually been rewritten. Such entries include for instance the first portrayal of Montgomery's future husband, Ewan Macdonald, and a description of a former beau, Lewis Dystant (see UJ2: 399–400 and UJ1: 339–340). Montgomery had her reasons for such stern control of her romantic self – perhaps she wanted to be seen as an independent individual not at the mercy of men[55] –, but it is interesting to study how this controlled image surfaces and the instances where it unveils itself.

The first two important romantic experiences for Montgomery were those with Nate Lockhart and Willard Pritchard. As already mentioned, the first walk home with Nate introduces the romantic theme in the journals. Nate Lockhart was the

55 Loss of control for women in Montgomery's time was a dangerous fate, especially loss of sexual control, because of fear of getting pregnant and becoming a 'fallen woman' (see chapter 3). Lillian Faderman (1991: 48) notes that 'popular wisdom' in the nineteenth century saw decent women as uninterested in genital sexuality and that they 'merely tolerated their marriage duties'. Faderman (1981: 156) discusses this especially in relation to the nineteenth-century society's attitudes towards love between two women: 'It was doubtful enough that they [women] would concern themselves with any form of sexual satisfaction, but that they would seek sexual expression without a male initiator was [in]credible'. Northrop Frye (1976: 73) notes that romance traditionally delights in '"fate worse than death" situations', in which 'virginity is to a woman what honor is to a man'.

stepson of a Baptist minister in Cavendish and Montgomery's schoolmate with whom she could talk about books and writing and rival in pursuing excellence in school. Directly after Nate, Will takes over the part of the romantic lead in the Prince Albert entries. Another schoolmate, Will Pritchard was the son of a Saskatchewan farmer and the brother of Montgomery's dear friend Laura. The narrator employs a similar tone of voice – one that is romantic but dubious about love – to both, but there are instances where this voice does not persevere. Both boys were important early companions for Montgomery and their names keep surfacing later in the journals when she reminisces her youth. Thus, it seems logical that there exist instances where the unromantic voice so common in the journal falls silent and we hear a voice that is genuinely romantic, although the later editor's hand has clearly intervened by polishing scenes and downplaying the swooning voice of a romantic teenager.

Although the narrator definitely depicts all types of incidents and emotions in the early Cavendish and Prince Albert entries respectively, it cannot be denied that most of them are about Nate and Will. Reading a diary, we do not often register a particular plot, because so many diverse plot lines coexist. However, when a specific plot line is scrutinised and followed, its formation and appearance in the text become visible. This is especially true of the early romance entries about Nate and Will. For instance, the plot of the relationship with Nate can be broken down into sections. First, the narrator opens the scene with a walk home with Nate (discussed in 2.1), introducing the initial romantic story in the journals. Subsequently, a second walk home is depicted. After this, in several successive entries the development of the relationship is portrayed, culminating in the cathartic moment of receiving a letter from Nate, in which he declares his love. This in turn spoils the friendship and ultimately the relationship and also eventually concludes the storyline, which then proceeds to the next romantic plot line with Will.

The story of the narrated I's relationship with Nate is presented in romantic terms right from the start. The entry of November 13, 1889, on the first walk home, puts into words the narrated I's warm feelings about this great event: 'You don't know how silly I felt, walking down that road arm in arm with Nate' (*CJ1*: 8). The entry not only validates the relationship between the two, but also commences another storyline that is then followed in several entries: the rivalry over Nate between Montgomery and her schoolmates. The narrated I shares the honour of being escorted home by Nate with her best friend Mollie and the girls delight in knowing that the two other girls, Clemmie and Emma, who are 'crazy over Nate' (*CJ1*: 8), will be furious over the event, having witnessed it. Nate and the narrated I

are also made the talk of the school, which further formalises the relationship and gives it public prominence. Their teacher, Miss Gordon, organises a mock trial to untangle the quarrel between the girls, and 'the way Maud and Nate go on' (*CJ1*: 12) is given as its main cause. The journal portrays decided intimacy between the two with exclamations such as 'wait till I tell Nate!' (*CJ1*: 12).

In general, there is nothing veiled in the way the relationship is depicted in the first few entries, such as the one of February 4, 1890: 'I love to talk to Nate about books. There is nobody else in Cavendish who cares to talk about them' (*CJ1*: 17). The narrator even admits that she 'miss[es] Nate when he is sulking' (*CJ1*: 16) and that she feels 'cross and blue' (*CJ1*: 17) when they are at odds. The openly romantic tone changes when Nate asks *the* question directing the relationship from the safe realms of innocent camaraderie towards a love affair: '"*Which of your boy friends do you like best*?"' (*CJ1*: 18; emphasis original). As this is another milestone in the romantic development of the narrated I, its significance is stressed with a long entry that explains what has happened. The focus of the story veers towards love now, so the narrator begins the February 17, 1890 entry with an antagonistic comment: 'In school to-day I got a note from Nate … that is going to be a nuisance. I must make a long explanation why' (*CJ1*: 18).

The February 17, 1890 entry is a good example of a retrospective entry about events that supposedly happened 'today', that is, on the date in question, but which was most likely written or rewritten later and shaped to fit into the overall storyline. The entry itemises the events leading up to the fateful question and then finishes with a passionate statement: 'If Nate says he likes anybody else best I'll hate him!' (*CJ1*: 19). Here the voice fits a rather stereotypical romantic schoolgirl, full of absolute feelings of youth, and is quite excited compared to the strictly regulated voice of later romances. Such instances are rare glimpses of emotion in the journals and prove that original material coexists with edited material. Nevertheless, the whole picture, even this sincere-sounding voice, is decidedly constructed by Montgomery and no unedited sections as such can be found. Even if Montgomery left some of her original writing stand, it was done purposely in order to create a certain kind of self-image and story in the early entries.

In the next entry, February 18, 1890, the previous entry's negative stance towards Nate's note is accounted for. The narrated I's reaction and the narrator's tone take a full turn after the uncovering of Nate's love letter in this entry. The unromantic woman who fights against falling in love or admitting to have loved thus appears for the first time:

> [F]or hadn't that absurd boy gone and written down that he not only *liked* me best – but loved me! … He seemed in high spirits all the afternoon but I was as frigid as a glacier. I *am* sorry, when all is said and done, that this has happened. I feel that it is going to spoil our friendship. Besides, I don't care a bit for Nate *that way* – I really don't. I only just like him splendidly as a chum. (*CJ1*: 20; emphases original)

The word 'love' marks a turning point for the narrator: 'liking' is acceptable but 'love' is a red flag. Interestingly enough, the narrated I is equalled with a 'frigid glacier', a metaphor that has telling sexual undertones at least to modern readers. The narrating I is at pains to prove either herself or her future readers that she is not in love with Nate.

Part of Montgomery's reluctance to succumb to an overt textual discussion of romantic love might be better understood in the light of historical contextualisation. Although Montgomery edited her journals well into the twentieth century and as late as the 1930s – a decade that witnessed much more liberated ideas of courtship and sexual categories than the Victorian times, or at least more terminology –, the image she paints of herself as a flirtatious teenager owes greatly to nineteenth-century romantic ideals. In her extensive overview of the history of courtship in America, Ellen K. Rothman (1984: 105) notes for instance that in the mid to late nineteenth century it was not acceptable for women to do the courting publicly. Montgomery herself echoes this viewpoint in her derogatory comment on her childhood friend Mollie, whose real name was Amanda Macneill: 'Amanda disgusted her lovers with over-eagerness. She did too much of the courting!' (*CJ2*: 287).

More than anything, the older Montgomery wants to present herself as a decent person to her future readers. After all, she is aware of her status as a famous author and the wife of a minister. Rothman (1984: 192) also mentions that 'the fact that the single most salient gender distinction derived from sexuality made friendship between men and women appear to be not only difficult but dangerous', which might explain some of Montgomery's reluctance to expose her love interests. Admitting in public or even to yourself that you loved someone already equalled loss of control and entailed a commitment to the other person. In a time when the main goal of courtship was marriage, love was a serious business.[56] Denyse Yeast (1994: 117–

56 According to Rothman (1984: 23), 'the word "courtship" applied to situations where the intention to marry was explicit'. *Courting*, however, was used for general socialising between unmarried men and women, at least in the period between 1770 and 1840 (Rothman 1894: 23). Karen Lystra (1989: 84–85) maintains that the Victorians quietly approved of sex when it was associated with love and marriage, but utterly condemned lust as a phenomenon separate from love, at least when it came to women (see also Katz 1995: 41, 43).

118) furthermore notes that Montgomery 'posits friendship and romantic love as mutually exclusive' in her fiction and private writings. According to Yeast (1994: 118), Montgomery's reluctance to enter into 'sexual politics' in which female is subordinated to male via a romantic liaison can be explained by the more equal nature of a platonic relationship.

Thus, after the narrator adopts an unromantic tone of voice, it persists until the culmination of the relationship with Nate. On July 26, 1890 the narrator agonises: 'The fact is, Nate is absurdly sentimental these days – or would be if I would allow it. I hate that sort of thing. He has just spoiled our lovely, old comradeship completely' (*CJ1*: 34). Finally, in August of the same year, Nate leaves for college and the narrator moodily states: 'I was sorry to say good-bye to Nate … but not so sorry as I would have been if he had not spoiled our friendship by falling in love with me' (*CJ1*: 35). These scathing words could not be farther from the way the narrator speaks about Nate when the relationship is presented without the threatening presence of love.

The importance of this first romantic relationship is nevertheless acknowledged in the journal. In the February 18, 1890 entry, the narrator states after reading Nate's love letter: 'I admit I *do* feel a queer, foolish triumphant little feeling about it. I've often wondered if anyone would ever care for *me – that* way – and now someone really does' (*CJ1*: 20; emphases original). More than this overt sentence, the fact that Nate's love letter is inserted in the diary proves that it has some significance for the narrative of the journal. First, it shows that 'sentimentality', which the narrator asserts to hate, definitely has a place in that narrative, even if it is presented in indirect ways. Second, the letter gives voice to the potential male lover, which only happens occasionally in the journals. Generally the voice of the narrator predominantly reigns over the narrative, but in Nate's love letter we hear a truly sentimental male suitor expressing himself in a romantic manner: 'Of all my feminine friends the one whom I most admire … the one whom I *love* … is L.M. Montgomery, the girl I shook hands with, the girl after my own heart' (*CJ1*: 20; emphasis original).[57] Moreover, the function of the letter is to prove that the relationship was not merely based on the narrator's fancy, thus it bears the weight as a piece of evidence.

Similarly, when the narrator reminisces about her relationship with Nate further on in the journals, the style rarely succumbs to sentimentality. However, the mere existence of these recollections proves that they have importance for the narrative.

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57 It is curious that the letter refers to Montgomery as 'L.M. Montgomery', which is her later pen-name, whereas Nate otherwise calls Montgomery 'Polly' in the journal. It is probable that Montgomery wanted to emphasise that the teenage girl who stirred these amorous emotions in Nate is the same person as the famous author L.M. Montgomery and thus she changed whatever was originally in the letter.

After seeing Nate later in life in Halifax the narrator aptly articulates in the December 21, 1901 entry: 'This is a famous chance for some sentimental reminiscences! But I shall refrain! I'm too tired – and there's nothing worth saying – and it *was* all in another world' (*CJ2*: 39; emphasis original). A few months later, on February 15, 1902, the second time the narrated I is depicted as having run into Nate, the tone of the entry is similarly evasive: 'On the way home from the office I met *Nate*. … We gossiped inconsequentially and talked about old friends, keeping carefully to the surface of things of course. I might write several pages of reflection about this, of course. But I won't. I'll only think of them' (*CJ2*: 47; emphasis original).

This overt withholding of information should be noted. The narrator uses a technique that leaves much space for the readers' co-operation and imagination but also teases and irritates. Instead of arguing the case for or against – whether she still cares for Nate or not – the diary succumbs to silence and a veil is drawn on seemingly too private a matter. It is noteworthy that even this kind of unconcealed informing of the readers still guides the interpretation in a certain direction and is thus a conscious tactic employed by Montgomery.[58] By mentioning that she could write more if she wished, hinting that something is left untold, the narrator clearly directs readers to deduct that romantic feeling is being censured.

All this fits the conclusion that the romantic character in the journal is an artfully crafted image controlled by the author. Here lies the key to reading the entries that depict romance in the journals. It is as if the narrator wishes to remind us that what is not written is as important – if not more so – as what is actually written. The myth of the intimacy of diaries proves wrong: they are based on secrets and gaps to a great degree (see also McDonald-Rissanen 2001 and Simons 1990). Culley (1985: 22) encourages the reader of a diary to identify especially these 'silences' in the text, that is, '[w]hat the diarist did not, could not, or would not write'. There are after all things in life that are too personal even for a diary.

In an entry three and a half years later – August 6, 1905 – the voice of the unromantic woman is blended with more complex tones. The narrator contemplates Nate's old letters and admits that 'even tonight his boyish compliments gave me one of the old pleasant little thrills, the secret joy with which a woman recognizes her power to please – a joy measured by the gauge of the man. And Nate, even as a schoolboy, was worth pleasing' (*CJ2*: 135). The narrator acknowledges women's power over men and admits that she enjoys it. This sensuality is quickly dispersed,

58 Bo Pettersson (2015: 116) terms this kind of guiding the readers as *expositional manipulation*, in which 'even discarded meanings are part and parcel of the meaning of a fictional narrative'.

of course, by a familiar statement: 'I feel no interest in the Nate of *today*' (*CJ2*: 135; emphasis original) to correct any romantic misconceptions.

Even though Montgomery's own letters to Nate are not available, the narrator feels the need to ensure the reader that 'they were rather cool, intellectual epistles as I recall them now' (*CJ2*: 135) to dispel any sentimentality on her part. But to consider that Montgomery and Nate wrote each other letters every day – 'Every evening I wrote him a letter, secure of receiving a similar epistle next morning in school' (*CJ2*: 135) – and that a characteristic of Nate, his familiar 'whistle coming up the old church hill' (*CJ2*: 136), is transferred to Teddy, Emily's love interest in *Emily of New Moon* (1923), the most autobiographical of Montgomery's novels, indicates that the romantic significance of Nate in the journals is considerable. Indeed, in a later entry of January 5, 1917, the narrator admits that 'I even wrote him [Nate] some love-letters in response to various ardent epistles of his' (*SJ2*: 203). Even in this entry, however, the narrator is careful to stress that Nate and his memory mean 'nothing' to her, but she does admit that 'I was a minx, I am afraid' (*SJ2*: 203).

The early romances with Nate and Will are the main romantic material that recurs repeatedly in the journals, and the narrator admits as much in the August 6, 1905 entry: 'No memories of my life are more clear-cut than those [the times with Nate]. They were written upon virgin pages' (*CJ2*: 135). However, at the end of the entry, all of which deals with Nate's letters, the narrator continues her style of making excuses: 'I've got a heartache. Not for anything in particular but just on general principles' (*CJ2*: 136). After an entry two and a half handwritten pages long on an old schoolmate, blaming 'general principles' for heartache seems almost comically understated. Furthermore, the next entry, dated August 11, 1905, continues the reminiscence by referring to a popular novel, *Eugene Aram*,[59] that Montgomery and Nate read at the same time and 'were both enraptured by it' (*CJ2*: 136).

After the culmination of the relationship with Nate, Will Pritchard takes on the role of the romantic male lead in the journal. As Montgomery spent the year between 1890 and 1891 in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, with her father's new family, she became friends with the Pritchards, first Will and then Laura. When first mentioned and depicted in the December 5, 1890 entry, Will appears to be a safe companion in teenage infatuation but first and foremost a good friend: 'A new boy is going now – Willie Pritchard. He has red hair, green eyes and a crooked mouth! *That* doesn't sound attractive and he certainly isn't handsome – but he's splendid. I have lots of

59 According to the notes of *The Complete Journals* this is the 1832 novel by Edward Bulwer-Lytton 'about a murderer redeemed by love' (*CJ2*: 136).

fun with him (*CJ1*: 52; emphasis original). 'Have lots of fun' is a typical set phrase in the journals, often used to describe social activities in the teenage entries and mark that something is left untold. Hence, quite logically, the phrase or its variation repeatedly appears in connection with scenes of romance creating a lacuna in the text. Just as in the first entries on Nate, the narrator underlines the camaraderie in her relationship with Will: 'We are just the best of friends. He always walks home from school with me and carries my books' (*CJ1*: 59).

Although the first mentions of Will are matter-of-fact, such as 'Willy was there and walked home with me' and 'Willy is *awfully* nice – the nicest boy I ever met' (*CJ1*: 57; emphasis original), quite soon more flirting tones emerge. The narrated I is openly described as rehearsing the role of a flirtatious schoolgirl, even though the unromantic voice of the narrator does surface eventually. For instance, the narrating I depicts how 'Will stole my little gold ring and put it on his finger. He wouldn't give it back but then I didn't coax *very* hard' (*CJ1*: 69; emphasis original), and how 'he [Will] did look so cute on horseback with his little jockey cap on' (*CJ1*: 77). This appealing voice disappears almost completely later in the journals and reappears only in the secret diary Montgomery kept with her friend Nora, which deliberately mocks the persona of a shallow flirt created in the early journal entries.

The narrating I very carefully portrays the narrated I as a blushing heroine: '[W]hen Will says anything significant to me I color up and look foolish and lose my voice instantly' (*CJ1*: 78). Their encounters are marked with innocent flirtation and the style of writing is mostly humorous and unsentimental, such as in this very dramatically portrayed scene in the entry of July 5, 1891, written at the Pritchards' farm, Laurel Hill: 'I sat down on one corner of the sofa and Will sat down on the other. … But there must have been something queer about that sofa because the space between us gradually narrowed in the most mysterious manner until it wasn't there at all! I'm sure *I* never moved (*CJ1*: 79; emphasis original). The flirtatious scene culminates in a romantic act in which the narrated I gives a lock of her hair to Will.

However, the final paragraph of the July 5, 1891 entry, most likely added by the older Montgomery, restores the romance into realism. No matter how unsentimentally the relationship is presented the narrator still needs to clarify that none of this has anything to do with love: 'I *like* Will better than any boy I ever met but I *know* I don't love him – he just seems like a brother or a jolly good comrade to me' (*CJ1*: 80; emphases original). Interestingly enough, the narrator still toys with the idea of whether the relationship with Will might end up in marriage – 'I wonder if this will ever come to anything?' (*CJ1*: 80) –, but the retrospective author's voice,

who already knows the outcome, downplays the importance of the romantic events by decidedly stating: 'No, of course it won't. We will just be good friends' (*CJ1*: 80).

Towards the end of Montgomery's time in Prince Albert, the romance with Will reaches its highest and most expressive point. The entries of July 24 and July 31, 1891 are about school picnics during which the romance between the narrated I and Will is overtly depicted, also in physical terms. The narrator discusses with the journal as her interlocutor the romantic style and the situation with Will in an interesting exchange: 'At first I prowled around with Aggie and Martha Thompson, although out of the corner of my eye I saw quite plainly that Will P. was shadowing us. "Oh," you said – didn't you? – "*now* I begin to see why you had a good time." Don't be impertinent, you journal, you!' (*CJ1*: 83; emphasis original) Having the journal talk back to her, as it were, the narrator draws the readers' attention to the flirtatious nature of the narrated I's relationship with Will.

The first picnic is then portrayed in a very dramatically satisfying way. Will and the narrated I take a walk, during which Will pins flowers on her dress and gives her candy (*CJ1*: 84). After tea, they wander off again and cut their initials in a poplar tree, in what is probably one of the most clichéd images of romantic love. The entry of July 24, 1891 finishes with another exchange between the narrator and her journal, this time employed in order to understate and make fun of the sentimentality of the entry: 'I had the loveliest time at the picnic. "Just because Willy walked with you," you remarked scornfully – didn't you? – "and said pretty things to you and generally made a fool of himself, over you"!!!! Well, and what if that was why?' (*CJ1*: 84)

The July 31, 1891 entry includes another picnic during which physical intimacy between Will and the narrated I is described. Driving back in a thunderstorm, the narrated I is depicted leaning back and cuddling up against Will, 'as it was getting dark and everyone else was likewise lost under umbrellas' (*CJ1*: 85). They have 'a nice little talk' about writing each other 'ten year letters'[60] and Will is quoted saying '"Perhaps we'll be reading them *together*"' (*CJ1*: 85; emphasis original). However, as is usual in the romance plot of the journals, the unsentimental editor's voice has the last word: 'It gave me a pleasant little thrill – but still, I can't quite see *that*' (*CJ1*: 85; emphasis original).

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60 Montgomery (*CJ1*: 466) explains the origins of 'ten year letters' in the entry of October 18, 1900: 'Ten years ago, when I was a schoolgirl of fifteen, I had a mania for writing "ten year letters" – which being interpreted means a letter, "written, signed, and sealed," to be opened and read ten years from the date of writing. I don't know exactly where I got the idea – I think I'd read something like it in a "Pansy" book. At any rate I adopted it for my own, for it seemed so fine and romantic.'

The relationship concludes when Montgomery leaves Prince Albert. The August 26, 1891 entry not only terminates the storyline of the Prince Albert year, but also the romantic story with Will. Their last scene is passionate and thoroughly fictionalised:

> He [Will] and I walked back in silence. … Above us the stars were shining tranquilly in the clear August sky. … It all looked dream-like and I felt as if I were in a dream. 'Well', he said, holding out his hand – and his voice wasn't *very* steady – 'good-bye. …' 'I'll never forget you, you may be sure,' I said, as we shook hands. … I went up to my room and read his letter. He said in it that he loved me and always would. I curled up on my bed after I had read it and had a good cry. (*CJ1*: 91; emphasis original)

This brief account of the events shows how by a few simple strokes the narrator portrays the romantic finale of the story. Nature description sets the scene, which is a common feature in all of Montgomery's texts: the two lovers meet under starlight in a dream-like atmosphere. Emotional dialogue highlights the characters' feelings and the scene even has a dramatic ending in the form of the heroine receiving a love letter, just as in the story with Nate. What actually happened is not of essence here. How events are portrayed in the journal creates its own inner truths, or as Kagle and Gramegna (1996: 39) put it, each entry becomes 'fact' as it is fixed on paper.

After Montgomery leaves Prince Albert, Will loses his status as the romantic lead in the journals. The narrator does mention him occasionally, wondering how he is doing, and receives letters from him, but as with Nate, the main plot line is now finished. If the two storylines are returned to in the journals, it is in the context of reminiscence, which in itself is a romantic and nostalgic way of looking at the past. Reading old letters is a typical way in which dramatic memory scenes in the journal are developed. In the March and April 1904 entries, the old letters of Will, who had died in 1897, are brought to the daylight, but the effect on the narrated I of reading them is quite different from that of Nate's letters, discussed earlier. The change of voice is consistent, however, as it agrees with how the relationship with Will was portrayed. As flirting was important in defining the relationship, the role of the grieving lover is reserved for the narrated I now that Will is dead.

When the narrator reports Will's death in the April 15, 1897 entry, the style is composed, if lamenting. The narrated I opens Will's ten year letter which is 'a letter of love' and the narrator mentions 'how it hurt poor lonely me to read it!' (*CJ1*: 361) However, in contrast, when the narrated I's reaction to reading Will's old letters is outlined in the later March 16, 1904 entry, the portrayal is violent and wildly

passionate, just as in the dramatisation of Montgomery's romance with a farmer called Herman Leard depicted in entries from 1898 (see chapter 3):

> As I read on and on it seemed as if a cruel hand were tightening its clutch on my throat. Yet I dreaded to come to the end of them and stop reading. It was awful – horrible. When I had read the last I fled to my room and thought for a few minutes that I would surely go *mad* if I couldn't scream out loud until I had exhausted all the feelings that were in me. (*CJ2*: 96; emphasis original)

The calm and evasive tone of voice depicting the effect of reading Nate's letters could not be farther from this wild outburst, which seems to continue the style Montgomery mastered in the Herman Leard entries. Indeed, Will and Herman are overtly contrasted at the end of the entry. The narrator ponders that 'if I had my choice tonight of calling *Will* or *Herman* out of that black outer void I'd call *Will*' (*CJ2*: 98; emphases original).

Will is used as an excuse to return to the romantic *parole* and to flirt with the past:

> 'Oh, Will, Will, if you could only come back and be my friend again! … I want to see him – to laugh with him – to look into his gray eyes and bring the smile to his crooked pleasant mouth – I want to talk nonsense to him – to have him talk nonsense to me – about dances and picnics and flirtations, just as he talked in his letters.' (*CJ2*: 97–98)

As always, however, while stating this, the narrator quickly notes that 'I'm not thinking of *love* at all – that has nothing to do with *this* mood' (*CJ2*: 97; emphases original), as if once again to make clear that even after Will's death, their relationship was purely based on friendship.

2.3 LEARNING THE TRADE: ROMANTIC CONVENTIONS

Although thoroughly edited and fictionally coloured, the entries on early teenage romances with Nate and Will are not yet fully developed artistic compositions, unlike the subsequent romance entries in the journals. The main romantic themes and literary tactics begin in these entries, but it is as if Montgomery was using the first pages of her journal as a testing ground in which to practice literary conventions that come into full bloom later. One of these conventions is the pairing up of two

suitors, scrutinised in chapter 3. The tendency to create tension in the romantic story of the journals by comparing and contrasting two men – either the 'right' and the 'wrong' suitor or two 'wrong' ones – begins already in the Prince Albert entries, in which the narrator opposes the boyish love of Will with the unwanted attentions of her teacher, Mr Mustard. Additionally, after the narrated I's return from Prince Albert in the 1892 entries, she is courted by two men, Edwin Simpson and Lem MacLeod, who are teasingly set against each other, although neither of them quite fits the part of the 'right' suitor.[61]

Furthermore, Montgomery often begins storylines well before readers are even aware of their existence. Part of the tactic of fictionalising events is to plant names of characters and plot lines in earlier entries that culminate later, so as to make sure that readers of the artistically composed entry are already familiar with the main characters and context. Such is the case with Edwin Simpson who is casually introduced in the 1892 entries and who then later features in the Herman Leard episode, which is the main romantic section in the journals. Similarly, the other suitor's, Lem MacLeod's proposal in 1894 is carefully constructed as a romantically complete scene. The reason the entry functions so well is because readers most likely remember this wrong suitor from the earlier entries of 1892, paired up with Ed Simpson, and they can anticipate that the man will get the mitten.

All in all, in the entries that follow the Prince Albert ones from 1892 onwards, the narrated I is presented as having mastered the newly learned role of a cold-blooded flirt. She gives a hard time to the presumptive lovers, just as the narrating I does when describing their clumsy attempts, as in this entry dated July 30, 1892: 'Then Jack [Laird] and I came back in the moonlight and Jack began to simmer; but the more sentimental *he* got the more saucy and independent I got. When he said he "loved" me I laughed at him so much that he got sulky' (*CJ1*: 130; emphasis original). In retrospect, the narrator creates an image of the narrated I as a 'saucy and independent' person who pushes boys down from their high horses. Even the word 'love' is treated disrespectfully and mockingly, highlighted by the use of inverted commas.

The journals are also used as evidence by which the narrator persuades the readers that the blame is always on the men. One of the unfortunate suitors is Lewis Dystant, who courts Montgomery while she is teaching in Bideford between 1894 and 1895. The narrator is ruthlessly clear in the July 2, 1895 entry: 'I certainly, most certainly never gave him [Lewis Dystant] any encouragement whatsoever to think

61 Edwin Simpson has the questionable honour of being fitted the role of the wrong suitor twice in the journals. In the 1892 entries he is paired with Lem and later in the 1897 and 1898 entries with Herman Leard.

that I cared anything for him except as a friend' (*CJ1*: 277). She even makes the unlucky male in question to repeat the testimony in the diary: 'Lou said he loved me but admitted that I had never encouraged him' (*CJ1*: 277).

The 'court room style' perseveres throughout the journals, as in this example with another suitor from March 2, 1901:

> Speaking of Henry [McLure] I have disposed of him as kindly as possible. He had begun to grow foolish in spite of my strictly friendly attitude. I certainly never gave him any encouragement. He admitted that himself but said he had always loved me, long before he began to drive me about. (*CJ2*: 8)

The phrasing is almost identical with the earlier instance and the narrated I's strategy the same. Devereux (2005: 241) notes that Montgomery indeed saw her journal as an accurate source of information and even referred to it in her will on several occasions, thus highlighting the journals' status as a legally binding document.

There is something similarly official in the January 5, 1917 entry in which Montgomery gives an account of her love affairs in a supposedly revealing way. While the entry purports to be 'a full and frank' (*SJ2*: 202) account, it does not really give away any romantic secrets or passionate feeling. The narrator lists the lovers, good, bad and insignificant ones, but does not admit *really* having loved any of them, body and soul (*SJ2*: 201–206). Following up the journal entries on most of the men mentioned in the January 5, 1917 listing is very interesting, such as the ones on the above mentioned Lem MacLeod and Edwin Simpson as well as Montgomery's cousin, John (Jack) Sutherland, but none of these entries entail the literary significance that is the focus here. It is not until Lewis Dystant that the literary qualities of the entries become evident and similar conscious plot construction takes place as in the Nate and Will entries.

The reason the Lewis Dystant entries (November 5, 1894 to July 2, 1895) are worthy of attention is not that they present overwhelming romantic feeling or portray Dystant as an important suitor in Montgomery's romantic saga, but because they exemplify what Montgomery undertakes in forming the romance story in her journals. First of all, the entries are characterised by thorough rewriting and thus manipulation of what type of 'truth' of the events surface and affect the readers of the journals. Most of these entries were written on reinserted pages in the handwritten ledgers, which is a clear clue that some earlier material was tampered with and replaced (see UJ1: 339–340).

Rewriting and replacing older entries with newly written ones is not by any means limited to the Lewis Dystant entries, but takes place with most of the male leads in the journals, such as Nate Lockhart, Will Pritchard and Ewan Macdonald, Montgomery's husband (see chapter 4).[62] However, what is striking in the rewritten entries on Dystant is that there is such a long section of them, seven consecutive entries in total. Furthermore, the entries, albeit rather short and prosaic, demonstrate the kind of writing techniques and conventions that Montgomery rehearses for creating romantic scenes, such as the stereotypical moonlight drives and walks.

Therefore, if we take into account that several of the early entries depicting the narrated I's interactions with 'Lou D.' are rewritten in the handwritten manuscripts, the artificial nature of the presentation of this suitor's attentions and wooing becomes evident. Not knowing what Montgomery decided to omit and rewrite in these entries, one can only deduce that the original entries did not match the main romantic thematics of the diary. Hence, the rewritten early references to Dystant are dispassionate and pointedly unromantic. The narrating I lists on November 5 and 13, 1894, how 'I promised to go with Lew D. to a week-night preaching service at Tyne Valley tomorrow night' (*CJ1*: 249)[63] and 'Lou is a nice fellow. That is, he does very well for somebody to drive me about' (*CJ1*: 250). Most mentions of Dystant are very matter-of-fact and exceedingly impersonal, even harsh, as in the latter quotation. Contrasted with the entries that have not been rewritten – as far as is known – the tactic is notably different. The narrator does not, of course, say anything directly, but the sheer number of entries describing the narrated I's walks and drives with Dystant proves their importance. The language employed in these entries implies that once again the careful diarist is consciously downplaying the romantic discourse.

The recurring technique in several entries is strikingly similar. First, the narrating I makes a casual comment on how 'Lew D. came out to take me', or, 'last night about six Lou Dystant's sleigh-bells jingled through the frosty air as he came to take me to a lecture', or, 'Lou came along as we left the P.O. [post office]' (*CJ1*: 249, 251, 267). After the introductory sentence, a nature description follows that fills in the romantic gap in the scene, as in the entry of December 6, 1894:

> We [Lewis Dystant and the narrated I] were soon flying up the road in a dazzle of frost and moonlight. I never enjoyed a drive more. The night was bewitching,

62 See for example the entry of June 11, 1890 (*CJ1*: 29–30; UJ1: 37–38) on Nate and the entries of December 5–10, 1890 (*CJ1*: 53–54; UJ1: 71–72) on Will.

63 On this same page the original manuscript features a photo of Lewis Dystant.

> the roads were like gleaming stretches of satin ribbon, there was a white frost that softened the distant hills and woods to a fairy dream, and the moonshine fell white and silvery over all. Earth looked like a cold, chaste bride in her silver veil, waiting to be waked by her lover's kiss to warmth and love and passion. (*CJ1*: 251)

Even the typical nature passage, of which there are many in the journals in general, employs a sensuous style that implements the careful 'I never enjoyed a drive more'.

Towards the end of the above quotation the language becomes more elaborate and daring, raising the question of whether the narrator is actually portraying the landscape or rather the narrated I and her disposition as a 'cold, chaste bride' waiting to be kissed passionately in the presence of a convenient suitor. It is not clear or even relevant if Montgomery was actually interested in Lewis Dystant or not,[64] but the way the journal continually introduces romantic scenes with these kinds of literary techniques – such as distancing and nature metaphors – implies that what cannot be written overtly is rendered metaphorically. As Lorna Drew (1995: 22) puts it, sexual desire is coded in landscape descriptions, a fairly typical phenomenon in nineteenth-century, especially gothic, texts. Christiana Salah (2013: 110) also refers to this by stating that 'the most overtly sexual language [in Montgomery's writing] tends to be associated with the natural world rather than the masculine body of the lover'.

After almost a year worth of entries, in which the obvious intimacy of the narrated I and Dystant is depicted – 'Getting here, Lou and I did not go in but went around to the corner of the veranda where we perched ourselves on the railing and chatted for an hour. It was simply a delicious night. The moonlight fell in a misty golden shower over trees and grass' (*CJ1*: 267; May 6, 1895) –, the tale ends in a by now familiar way: Lewis Dystant proposes and the narrated I refuses. The romance, if any, in this July 2, 1895 entry is the result of the unrequited love and the dramatic suffering of the suitor depicted, but the narrator has definitely let go of any sentimental phrasings: 'I told him he would forget me in time and find somebody else better suited to him – but in common with all lovelorn suitors he couldn't seem to take that view of it at all' (*CJ1*: 278). In a sharp tone, the suitor's behaviour is utterly condemned: 'I think he [Lewis Dystant] might have displayed a little more dignity. His abandon of feeling was rather disgusting, to speak the plain truth' (*CJ1*: 278).

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64 Any romantic significance of the nature description in the December 6, 1894 entry is undermined by the way it ends in a frivolous evaluation on Dystant: "Lou D. came out and drove me down. He is really a nice *handy* person" (*CJ1*: 252; emphasis original).

The romantic conventions that are introduced in the early entries of the journals become run-of-the-mill material in the later romantic scenes, so much so that it seems the moon was shining every time Montgomery took a drive with a man. The artificial nature of some of the entries is a good reminder, however, of how conventional ways of writing emerge. In 1894, when Montgomery was studying at the Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown,[65] the journal captures Montgomery learning the skills needed to depict romantic escapades. Not only does college teach young Montgomery about student life and how to write about one's own life, but also how to use fictional works as a basis for writing about romance and herself as a romantic character. For instance, the May 31, 1894 entry mentions that the narrated I is expected to write an essay on the character of Portia in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (*CJ1*: 215), on which a footnote of *The Complete Journals* notes that 'LMM's essay emphasizes the wit of Portia … as well as her tact in handling suitors, seeing her delicacy in love as less important than her intellectual power and eloquence' (*CJ1*: 215). It seems that the essay could have been written about Montgomery's own romantic character in her journals.

Nevertheless, the two suitors theme mentioned earlier surfaces already in the early entries about the Prince Albert time, proving that the professional author who has already 'learned the trade' shows her skills even in the beginning of the journal. Thus, let me go back in time to 1890, when the narrated I flirts with Will and causes havoc in the heart of her teacher, Mr Mustard. The entries on Will discussed above gain a new perspective when read in parallel with another storyline, that of another unfortunate suitor who courts the narrated I and finally proposes. In addition to the two suitors convention that is rehearsed in these entries, the familiar plot line of courting that ends in an unsuccessful proposal is also introduced in the Prince Albert entries for the first time, after which it gets repeated with Lewis Dystant, as I have noted, and several other men, such as Lem MacLeod.

The first time Will Pritchard is mentioned in the December 5, 1890 entry there lurks in the background a by-then familiar character, Montgomery's teacher in Prince Albert, Mr Mustard. Even before Will's appearance, Mr Mustard is portrayed as his complete antithesis: he often has 'a cranky fit' and 'a pretty hot temper' (*CJ1*: 46–47), while Will is 'splendid' and the narrated I has 'lots of fun with him' (*CJ1*: 52). In the December 5, 1890 entry, right after Will is introduced and depicted, the narrator casually remarks: 'To-day we were all a little hilarious and poor Mr. Mustard lost his patience' (*CJ1*: 52). What might seem like a coincidence is actually a carefully planted comparison of two prospective suitors, since the readers will

65 Charlottetown is the capital of Prince Edward Island.

gradually learn that Mr Mustard's interest in the narrated I goes beyond the mere official relationship of teacher and student. Although a teacher courting a pupil can seem disturbing, Mr Mustard was only six years Montgomery's senior, twenty-two in 1890, and as Montgomery's fiction proves, young country-school teachers marrying their pupils was not unheard of.

Between the entries that mention Will and the narrated I's growing attachment to him Mr Mustard looms as an omnipresent character. Naturally he is part of the narrated I's life, since he is her teacher, but that alone does not explain his presence in these entries. The role of Mr Mustard is to fill the shoes of the 'wrong' suitor, whereas Will is fitted the role of the 'right' suitor.[66] Mr Mustard's attentions also create tension in the narrative, as the entries build up towards the proposal scene and the culmination of the story. For instance, the narrator mentions several times that Mr Mustard is repeatedly in a bad mood, while pretending not to know the cause for it: 'Mr. Mustard has been in the doleful dumps for a week and you can't get a word out of him. He takes these spells frequently. He says he doesn't know what is the matter with him. Well, neither do I, but I *do* know that he is abominably cranky' (*CJ1*: 52; emphasis original).

Throughout the entries the narrator subtly alludes to Will and the narrated I's flirting being the cause of Mr Mustard's bad mood. In an entry dated February 23, 1891, the narrator states that 'Mr. Mustard was furious with me to-day because he caught me exchanging notes with Will. What *does* make him act so?' (*CJ1*: 61; emphasis original) After this affected ignorance, eleven entries relate the visits by Mr Mustard during which both his unsuitability as the 'wrong' suitor and the forthcoming proposal scene are hinted at. It is especially the 'wrongness' of Mr Mustard that is made clear:

> That detestable Mustard came again to-night and stayed until 11.30. To be able to keep up a conversation with him one ought to be posted on every subject from Adam down, to be blessed with a large supply of patience in order to listen to all the stale anecdotes he never fails to rehash at every call, and, in brief, to assume interest in *everything*. (*CJ1*: 65; emphasis original; April 9, 1891)

The narrator then lists the boring topics of the conversation and mentions that among them was 'Mary's wedding … weddings in general – rather a risky topic, say

66 It should be noted that for Montgomery the 'right' male suitor never really materialises, at least in the journals' narrative, since the narrated I never marries any of the suitors. Montgomery's husband is rather vaguely portrayed in the diary, but he is definitely not the right suitor, except when presented in the secret diary of Montgomery and her friend Nora (see chapter 4).

you?' (*CJ1*: 66) and admits in the next entry, April 20, 1891, that 'his [Mr Mustard's] attentions are becoming rather serious' (*CJ1*: 66).

Montgomery combines very skilfully the slowly growing attachment between Will and the narrated I and the equally increasing hatred towards Mr Mustard. The actual proposal scene, dated July 1, 1891 and foreshadowed by three entries (June 22, June 26, and June 28, 1891), is far from romantic and continues the mocking tone the narrator has adopted with Mr Mustard: 'Mustard actually *mustered* – oh, forgive the pun. It just *made itself* – up enough courage to put his fate to the test this evening. He did it about as awkwardly as possible but he did it' (*CJ1*: 77; emphases original). Mr Mustard is overtly contrasted with Will – 'Now, when Will says anything significant to me I color up and look foolish and lose my voice instanter' (*CJ1*: 78) – and the narrator shows little sympathy towards the star-crossed suitor. The usual judgement befalls Mr Mustard as the narrator declares that 'he has brought it all on himself, for any sane man might have taken the hint that I had no use for him long ago' (*CJ1*: 78).

Mr Mustard's proposal can be compared to another one with Lem MacLeod depicted in the October 22, 1894 entry. Although a much more romantically convincing entry, its end result is nevertheless the same as with Mr Mustard. The narrator constructs a passionate scene full of dialogue, in which Lem takes the narrated I 'in his arms' several times and makes the narrated I stammer, blush and gasp in confusion (*CJ1*: 245–247). At the end of the entry, however, the common excuses are once again expressed and the narrator explicitly highlights the inaptitude of the suitor: 'I don't know much about love but I *do* know I'm not a bit in love with Lem and never could be. … [H]e has no brains, culture, or breeding' (*CJ1*: 247; emphasis original).[67]

After the final episode with Mr Mustard, the narrator is prone to contrasting two men throughout the journals, sometimes at length with a fictional focus, as in the Herman Leard episode, and sometimes only cursorily. For example, when Ed Simpson and Lem MacLeod are discussed in the 1892 entries, it is often in connection to each other. Although both are eventually 'wrong' suitors, the narrator juxtaposes the two: 'Since it had to be one of them [to escort the narrated I home] I was glad it was Lem. Ed is much cleverer but somehow I never feel at ease in his company' (*CJ1*: 123). The narrator even contrasts the letters of Mr Mustard and Will, in which the receiving of Will's letter is an event 'worth recording', while Mr Mustard's letter

67 The narrator's assessment eerily resembles the one that is made of Herman Leard in the typescript version of the journals and in a letter to Montgomery's pen-friend George Macmillan: '[H]e [Herman] had no trace of intellect, culture or education' (TS: 21); 'He had no brains, no particular good looks, in short, nothing that I admire in a man' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 29).

is 'as dry and poky as himself' (*CJ1*: 101, 104). The romantic convention of the two suitors thus becomes one of the defining features in the depiction of conventional romance in the journals.

2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Detachment and caution are apt notions to define Montgomery's depictions of romance. They do not stem from what apparently took place, as does nothing else in the journal, but are the outcome of thorough editing. It is more than likely that Montgomery found multiple features in the journals that she wished to change when editing them. Why the journal is so laden with negated love, even during the early, fairly innocent romances is a crucial question. Why is Montgomery at pains to try to prove that she does not care for any of the men she is involved with, whether at fourteen, sixteen or older? Why is it the central issue? When considering that the context of writing is a personal diary and not a letter to a friend, for instance, this catering for the audience is especially striking.

As has been noted, the rhetoric and style in the journal serve its formation as a complete narrative and unified autobiography. The image of the narrated I as an unromantic character who never falls in love is thus highly logical as it emphasises and paves way to a later romance, that with Herman Leard. He is presented as *the* male love of Montgomery's life – although even his characterisation to some extent tallies with the overall strategy. Most readers, however, are likely to get slightly irritated and confused by the narrative voice that is at times strictly unsentimental while at others overtly emotional. Some of this confusion could be dispelled by the double vision needed in order to appreciate Montgomery's journal text: the overtly emotional passages in the diary are part of the original material from the non-extant notebooks, while the unsentimental comments, downplaying the love affairs and presenting the narrated I in a decent light, were added by the older Montgomery worrying over her posthumous reputation.

The discrepancies in the text can also be explained by the way the text simultaneously fights the conventional romance plot and happily succumbs and adds to it. Montgomery does not write within a feminist agenda as such, but these perplexing and even misleading cracks in the text offer perspectives from which to examine what female writers were not able or did not want to mention even in their private texts. What is at play in the early journal entries, then, is a subtle strategy that is simultaneously conservative and subversive. Montgomery actually advocates quite a modern stance towards the romantic ideals of love, marriage and conventional romance by dismantling their power with the ambiguous and unromantic female character. What Elizabeth Epperly (1992: 239) observes of Montgomery's fictional

characters proves to be a more general tendency: 'Montgomery plays with romance convention, seems to overturn it, and then submits to it, as she always did with her promising heroines, who never fully flout the expectations of the surrounding culture'.

As the journal proceeds, the narrator of the journals does not only use fictional models and literary characters as her inspiration but increasingly fictionalises the diary. One of the most fascinating aspects of the journal is the narrator's apparent uneasiness with romantic discourse, even though particularly in the first two handwritten volumes romance reigns over the narrative. The narrating I employs overt and exaggerated romantic language, as when depicting the two suitors theme (discussed in chapter 3), but this seemingly honest and emotional discourse is actually quite void of meaning and is merely used as a mechanic mould in order to create an authentic-sounding romantic scene. In contrast, there is also its complete antithesis, the unsentimental and humorous discourse and scenes that parody romantic encounters, which feature predominantly in the secret diary of Montgomery and her friend Nora (discussed in chapter 4). It is notable that both discourses are created through fictional and dramatic means.

As witnessed in this chapter, the narrating I of Montgomery's journals loves to portray the narrated I as a romantic heroine who induces tragic behaviour. Montgomery's (*CJ1*: 382) journal shows that she read novels and drew ideas from them to examine herself and her life, as in this example from October 7, 1897: 'It [*The Love Letters of a Worldly Woman*] is true to life, and therefore sad and tragical, as all life and all lives are, more or less'. She goes on to claim, in a typical vein, that 'some lives seem to be more tragical than others and I fear mine is one of such' (*CJ1*: 382). The narrating I even overtly states on November 28, 1901 that 'the only thing I can find pleasure in at present is in picturing myself as the forlorn heroine of a terribly sad life story' (*CJ2*: 35), quite like Montgomery's own fictional heroine Anne in *Anne of the Island* (1915) (see Epperly 1992: 70). In a similar vein as Anne, who is 'not broken by her sorrows (as a romance heroine might be), but is still able to fictionalize her own suffering' (Epperly 1992: 70), so does Montgomery fictionalise her tragic love affairs. Indeed, when depicting the male love of her life, Herman Leard, and the dramatic struggle between two suitors, the narrator abandons the unromantic character for a while and plunges into portraying the narrated I as a true forlorn heroine of a terribly sad life story by employing one of the most common romantic literary conventions.

CHAPTER 3

THE TWO SUITORS CONVENTION

As shown in the previous chapter, the literary convention of contrasting two suitors is a common tendency in Montgomery's journals to create interesting plot lines and develop dramatic tension. Montgomery employs the convention already in the teenage romance entries, but it is not until the entries on her involvement with Herman Leard and Edwin Simpson that its full potential emerges. In the teenage entries the narrated I is portrayed as an unromantic but flirtatious girl and woman who will not admit having loved any of her suitors. As the journal proceeds, however, a different brand of romance is presented with the aid of one of the most typical conventions in the romance tradition, that of the two suitors. Evelyn J. Hinz (1992: 210) indicates the similarities between life-writing and romance by observing that both feature heroes and heroines, present society as an antagonistic force and progress in a relatively straightforward fashion from crisis to crisis, finally reaching a climax. Montgomery's depiction of the two suitors affair employs all the features mentioned by Hinz and takes the fictionalisation begun in the early entries of the journal to the next level.

The two suitors story in the journals entails Montgomery's secret engagement to her second cousin Edwin 'Ed' Simpson and her equally secret simultaneous relationship with a farmer called Herman Leard, covered in the entries of 1897–1898 (first and second unpublished volumes). The entries that precede and follow the main depiction of the two suitors affair witness the narrated I driving around with Edwin Simpson's two brothers who fight over her, as well as covertly juxtapose Montgomery's future husband Ewan Macdonald with her sexually more enticing cousin, Oliver Macneill.[68] Not only is the two suitors affair thus firmly surrounded by rehearsals and reminders of the theme, but all other descriptions of romantic encounters in the journals are constructed only to give more resonance to this most important presentation of conventional romance. In short, even the early teenage romances are represented in an unromantic light in order to make the two suitors

68 For entries about Oliver Macneill, see *CJ2*: 238–241 and *SJ2*: 400–401. During his secret engagement to Montgomery, Ewan Macdonald is also mentioned in conjunction with Edwin Simpson (see *CJ2*: 152–161 and chapter 4) and William Houston, a husband of Montgomery's friend Tillie Houston (see *CJ2*: 361–364).

theme and its passionate tones seem more powerful and dramatic in the journals' narrative.

The two suitors convention has been discussed extensively by Montgomery scholars, most importantly by Helen M. Buss (1994) in her essay 'Decoding L.M. Montgomery's Journals / Encoding a Critical Practice for Women's Private Literature'. Irene Gammel (2005a) in '"I Loved Herman Leard Madly": L.M. Montgomery's Confession of Desire' and Mary Rubio in her biography *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Gift of Wings* (2008: 87–103) also write at length of the affair and the historical facts relating to it. With such rather different readings in mind, I will examine Montgomery's presentation of the events, more precisely the entries of June 30 and October 7, 1897 and January 22 and April 8, 1898, of which the last one is the longest and most laden with detail of the Herman Leard affair.[69]

All of these entries were written in retrospect, long after the actual events occurred and with an interval of approximately three months in between. In addition, since Montgomery carefully edited and re-narrated her journals, the entries seem more like interrelated and carefully constructed chapters in a novel than diary entries. The fact that they can be easily analysed as a continuing story, instead of having to dig for the plot, demonstrates their artistic finesse. The two suitors affair appears as a complete dramatized story rather than merely incidental journal entries. As Buss (1994: 91–92) notes in her essay on the basis of Jean E. Kennard's study *Victims of Convention* (1978), it is crucial to treat women's journals not as simply mimetic but rather as texts that employ literary conventions in a sophisticated and subversive way. She goes on to claim that 'diaries, as places of improvisation, experimentation, and collation, make use of all the discourses that a writer knows' (Buss 1994: 83). This is a pivotal point especially in relation to Montgomery's journals, although it must be noted that they can hardly be regarded as improvised.

While passion is a key word in the entries covering Montgomery's romantic entanglements with the two suitors, the conscious narrator is still ever-present in them. The narrator states in the entry of June 30, 1902, a few years after the culmination of the romance with Leard: 'Down, you vagabond of a heart! Haven't you been schooled into placidity by this time?' (*CJ2*: 58), thus drawing attention to how the heart should and will be regulated by reason. She then continues: 'You [heart] have no business to rise up and make a to-do because you are aching.

69 All of these entries are included in the first volume of *The Selected Journals* (1985), a fact that is not without significance, since almost 50 percent of original material was cut from them. The editors clearly acknowledged the importance of these examples of conventional romance to the life story of Montgomery.

We've all got to ache' (*CJ2*: 58). Placidity thus persists as the qualifying word in Montgomery's romantic portrayal of the two suitors story, although now conflicting with more intense aspects.

3.1 PREVIOUS READINGS OF THE TWO SUITORS THEME

Returning to Buss's and Gammel's essays on the two suitors convention, I will briefly discuss their analyses and explore what has been said of the literary convention in general. Buss's and Gammel's readings of Montgomery's two suitor entries are quite different in having parallel but fundamentally diverse foci. In her article Buss seeks a critical practice for reading Montgomery's journals with the aid of speech-act theory, Kristevan notions of textuality and feminist autobiography theories. Buss (1994: 87–89) begins with a reading of the entries that is mainly interested in decoding the writer's psychological state. Keeping in mind her position as a reader, Buss (1994: 90) as it were reveals the skeletons in her own 'literary closet'. Dissatisfied with her first reading – in which 'a corrective to too great an emphasis on psychological readings of private literature' existed and where she had 'assumed a certain naïveté, even in a practised writer, because of the use of the diary format' – she tries again and now finds in Montgomery's writing a sophisticated use of 'that most dominant of nineteenth-century literary conventions', the two suitors convention (Buss 1994: 90). Buss then re-reads the story with the matrix of this convention in mind and concludes that Montgomery, for whom the writer's identity is the most important, uses the literary convention in order to subvert her enslavement by patriarchal ideology (Buss 1994: 97).

Gammel on the other hand offers a more biographical account of the events. She traces historical facts of the silenced male lead of the story, Herman Leard, visiting actual scenes in Lower Bedeque, Prince Edward Island,[70] and interviewing people who still have knowledge of the affair. In other words, Gammel (2005a: 129) tries to fill in the gaps in Montgomery's account of the events, which in many ways eschews revealing the 'full story'. Gammel (2005a: 131) analyses how Montgomery performs her sexual self in the journals and concludes that what Montgomery ultimately accomplished with her version of the affair was disguising her discomfort with sexuality. The two suitors storyline is hence interpreted as a depiction of Montgomery's personal sexual crisis (Gammel 2005a: 138).

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70 Lower Bedeque is where Montgomery was working as a teacher and boarding in the Leard homestead in 1897–1898.

In my reading I focus, like Buss and Gammel, on Montgomery's use of a predominant romantic literary convention that is firmly grounded in fictional precursors. However, I hope to correct some of the problems in the previous readings by distinguishing between Montgomery the historical person and the narrator/narrated I of the journals. I claim that for Montgomery's journal narrative there are actually only wrong kinds of suitors, as long as they are men, hence laying the ground for the analysis of Montgomery's discourse of female romance, which is the focus of my two final chapters. Furthermore, I examine the amount to which the third character in this love triangle, Montgomery herself, or rather the narrated I, is as constructed a character as are the two suitors. According to Gammel (2005a: 138), this new self is Montgomery's sexual self. While there is some truth in this, the narrator of the journals also paints a picture of the main character with characteristics very much resonating the Victorian archetypes of the 'suffering heroine' and the 'fallen woman', which only hint at sexual passion in an indirect way. Especially the fallen woman trope is tactically applied in order to highlight the dramatic significance of the narrated I's battle between her lovers, as well as between passion and reason.

So, what is the two suitors convention like and where does it stem from? Buss (1994: 90–92) offers a thorough overview of the history of the practice. She observes that both she and Montgomery were raised on romance through the literature of domestic prose, which consists of the belief that in the centre of women's self-development is finding the right kind of man (Buss 1994: 90–91).[71] This is indeed the canvas for Montgomery's representation of the affair, since her familiarity with the romance genre – not only the novel, but also short stories and serials in magazines, as well as poetry – clearly reveals itself in the two suitors entries. Gammel (2005a: 129), on the other hand, articulates the convention as 'the popular courtship plot of dropping Mr Wrong for Mr Right'. Buss (1994: 91) goes on to quote from Jean Kennard's study, which focuses on how 'from Jane Austen to Erica Jong, we keep getting ourselves reappropriated into patriarchal linguistics and cultural practises' by the two suitors convention.

According to Kennard (1978: 12), the worst quagmires in this convention for women novelists are the tropes of victimhood it offers, in which '[m]aturity is seen to consist of adjusting oneself to the real world which is synonymous with

71 Mary McDonald-Rissanen (2008: 27) makes a similar point in relation to Prince Edward Island women: 'Throughout their lives, these women were exposed to discourses of church and conduct literature and literature specifically directed to women readers, such as romance literature'.

becoming like the right suitor'. Buss (1994: 92) adds to this tradition the romance novel's ending in marriage, which conflates the heroine's self-development with her role as wife. Apparently the only possibility to write female characters out of this convention is to let them die, as Buss (1994: 92) observes, using examples from Emily Brontë and Virginia Woolf.[72] It is noteworthy that Montgomery herself not merely as a journal writer but as a novelist used this conventional plot ending rather prevalently, if somewhat reluctantly. She was often frustrated by having to 'marry her characters off', since that was what her audience and publisher expected (see Rubio 2008: 470). However, as Rubio (1992) and others have argued, Montgomery's fiction employs subtle subversive strategies that often complicate the matter. In Salah's (2013: 113) opinion, Montgomery's fiction 'demonstrates a fascination with the moment of choice and with the urge to delay choosing'.

Kennard (1978: 10) also criticises the tendency of studies written during the time of her book – the 1970s – to treat literature as simply mimetic, documenting human experiences, without paying attention to the literariness and conventions novels might entail. This apt criticism can be extended to reading autobiographical texts, especially since the convention Kennard discusses can easily be found in Montgomery's journals. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that the two suitors convention is not merely a romantic convention, but also an important, although sometimes problematic, feature in much of the realistic fiction of the nineteenth century (see Kennard 1978: 11, 13). Kennard (1978: 80–81) mentions for instance George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1874) and Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) as examples of the convention in the midst of an otherwise highly realistic plot.

Is there anything subversive, then, in Montgomery's employment of the convention in the diary? In Buss's (1994: 92–93) opinion, the subversive aspects are evident in the way Montgomery changes the convention at the level of plot and character and intertwines the main narrative with others, mainly that of her development as a writer. This story of becoming an author is seen by Buss (1994: 96) as the ultimate subversive strategy against the victimising convention, but I would suggest that it is also the alternative romance story of female intimacy that replaces and fills the unsatisfying side of conventional romance.

For Montgomery, the two suitors trope works as a subversive strategy in that it highlights the impossibility of finding a right suitor among men. Women fulfil the role

72 One can come up with several other instances of this phenomenon in novels such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899) and Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* (1905). Indeed, the main character of the journals, Montgomery, did apparently commit suicide, although her death might have been caused by an accidental overdose of drugs. See for instance Rubio (2008: 575–580) for a discussion on Montgomery's death.

of right suitors in the journals and are connected with similar positive development in the main character (the narrated I) that is usually reserved for the right male suitor in fictional texts. The destabilising effect of the two suitors convention thus resides in converting the expected gender roles as well as employing a certain type of language and fictionalisation. By depicting romance in exaggerated language while presenting the narrated I as an archetypal Victorian heroine, Montgomery disrupts the convention by underlining its artificial nature. As discussed in chapter 2 in reference to the teenage romances, the narrator simultaneously unsettles and succumbs to the conventional romance plot. In other words, according to Epperly (1992: 119), Montgomery 'both preserves and questions romantic stereotypes'.

Since there are not many instances in the later journals where romances with men are described – Montgomery's account of her marriage is highly pragmatic and has been edited several times –, the prominence and weight of the two suitors plot for the depiction of conventional romance cannot be ignored. As a female author in the late-Victorian era and the early twentieth century, Montgomery was well aware that even her most autobiographical text, the journal, would be read through the romance matrix and she wanted to be in command of its description. The hyperbolic and staged qualities of the two suitors story further support this reading.

3.2 DEATH, REBIRTH AND 'MR WRONG'

Threads leading to the two suitors story can be found as early as February 27, 1892, when the narrator first mentions Edwin Simpson, who later in the narrative turns out to be the wrong suitor. According to this diary entry, Ed is 'very nice-looking and has fine eyes' (*CJ1*: 115). Edwin Simpson was Montgomery's second cousin and part of the notorious Simpson clan that Montgomery's grandfather detested. Clan-rivalry ran deep in Prince Edward Island and the fact alone that Ed was a Baptist, not a Presbyterian like Montgomery, was enough to make him an unsuitable marriage candidate. At this point in the story of the journals, the readers obviously cannot know that the narrated I will later become engaged to Ed and that he will have the role of one of the two suitors. Nevertheless, even within these early entries Ed is paired up with Lem McLeod and presented as the more unwanted of the two beaux courting the narrated I, as noted in chapter 2.

The next time Ed's name appears in the journals is on March 7, 1892, when the narrator depicts the narrated I's time in Park Corner, the home of Montgomery's Campbell cousins, during which the young folks enjoy sociable time in a group of which Ed is part. In the March 26, 1892 entry Ed is depicted walking the narrated

I home, which prompts the narrator to evaluate him: 'I don't know whether I like Ed or not. He is clever and can talk about everything, but he *is* awfully conceited – and worse still, *Simpsony*. To anyone who knows the Simpsons a definition of that quality is unnecessary; and to anyone who doesn't it is impossible' (*CJ1*: 120; emphases original). By this little slight to Ed's family, the narrator tactically introduces the theme of hesitation and dislike that is henceforth connected to Ed's character. It is possible that Montgomery added this section at the end of the entry during the copying process, since it foreshadows the forthcoming plot of her unhappy engagement to Ed.

After three years without mention, Ed reappears in the 1895 entries. In the entry dated April 12, 1895, the narrator notes that 'Ed Simpson was there [at The Grand Division][73] from Bedeque, where he is teaching and we had a short chat' (*CJ1*: 265). At this point in the narrative, the narrated I is driving around with Lewis Dystant (see chapter 2), thus merely a short reference to Ed suffices and there is no need to discuss romance in relation to him. Aptly enough, this entry nevertheless alludes to the village of Bedeque, which is the future setting of Montgomery's passionate drama with Herman Leard, or 'Mr Right'. Even if Ed's name does not have the significance of a suitor at this point, there are other subtle clues in the entries of 1895 which already point towards the two suitors theme.

In the entry of January 27, 1895, for instance, the narrator contemplates Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) by concluding that the book marvels at 'character-painting': '[A]nd such character – such deep, stormy, passion-wrung character. The hero is a *man*, the heroine a *woman*, and the true portrayal of such must ever appeal forcibly to the great heart of humanity, throbbing through all its varied phases of passion and pain' (*CJ1*: 258; emphases original). If one considers that the novel 'presents the tragic consequences of a sexual relationship outside of marriage' (*CJ1*: 258), as summarised by the editors of *The Complete Journals*, its appearance in the journals before the two suitors story is hardly a coincidence. At least it is clear that Montgomery was inspired by romance novels and their portrayal of passionate affairs and characters when she wrote her own love drama in the journals. The reference to *The Scarlet Letter* paves way for the sexual temptation the narrated I experiences in relation to Herman Leard.

Before the two suitors story properly commences in the journals, a variation of the motif is introduced: a depiction of the narrated I's dealings with Ed's brothers, Alf and Fulton Simpson, who openly fight over her. In the August 18, 1896 entry,

73 According to the footnotes of *The Complete Journals*, this was a regional meeting of the Sons of Temperance (*CJ1*: 265).

the narrator mentions that Ed and his brother Alf visited and that Ed had been able to secure a school in Belmont, his home village, for Montgomery to teach at. Ed's conduct resembles that of the fictional character Gilbert in *Anne of Green Gables*, who gives up his teaching post for Anne's benefit (*AGG*: 423). In the journals, however, the romantic entanglements are not quite as straightforward as in the novel: the entry makes a reference to Alf Simpson, Ed's brother, who will soon be cast the role of another beau courting the narrated I.

As depicted in the October 21, 1896 entry, Montgomery did accept Ed's offer for a job and moved to Belmont to teach at the local school. While searching for a boarding place, Montgomery stayed at the Simpson farm where Ed's parents and siblings were still living. The narrator only vaguely mentions in the October 21, 1896 entry that 'there are three boys home now – Fulton, Alfred and Burton. None of them is very good-looking – Ed would seem to have absorbed the good looks of the family' (*CJ1*: 329). Even so, 'Alf seems to be the nicest of the three' (*CJ1*: 329). In the rivalry between the brothers, it is Alf who prevails and the narrator later even confesses in the account of her romances that 'I loathed Fulton but I *had* a queer unaccountable attraction toward Alf' (January 5, 1917, *SJ2*: 205; emphasis original).

The Simpson brother drama is developed as a continuing story from one entry to the next, as is common for the way romance plots are constructed in the journals. First, in the November 7, 1896 entry, the narrator states that Ed Simpson had asked her to correspond with him. To assure her readers that she has no romantic investment in agreeing to Ed's request, Montgomery mentions some reasons: 'I think I will agree to an occasional correspondence as it will keep me in touch with college life and lend a little spice to this dead-and-alive sort of existence' (*CJ1*: 334–335). In the November 24, 1896 entry the narrated I is depicted as 'decidedly lonesome' at her new boarding place, but she goes to visit the Simpsons and Alf drives her home (*CJ1*: 336). In the next entry, November 26, 1896, a rehearsal of the two suitors motif is begun and the narrator depicts how Fulton is 'mad as a hatter' after hearing that his brother Alf has been driving around with the narrated I (*CJ1*: 337). Thus, while corresponding with one of the brothers, Ed, Montgomery as it were simultaneously enticed the attentions of the other two, who are contrasted in the diary as follows: Fulton, the cranky, sickly one who is overly jealous and uncontrollable – 'Fulton … is simply an awful crank' (*CJ1*: 340) –, and Alf, the calm and reasonable one, who knows how to behave in a proper way.

The entries discussing the Simpson brothers, namely those between November 26 and December 21, 1896, are important because they demonstrate to Montgomery's audience that she can induce 'intense passion' in men, thus not making the Herman

Leard episode seem too far-fetched in the journal's narrative. The narrator discusses in the December 21, 1896 entry Fulton's condition and her fear that 'if I had gone driving about with him [if he had not been ill] … his mad infatuation might have deepened into an intense passion, and I tremble to think what might have happened when he found that I could never care for him' (*CJ1*: 342). An example of such a case is then provided, which connects Montgomery's power over men with her mother's, Clara Macneill's similar talent: 'William Clark of Cavendish went insane and hanged himself – it was said because my mother would have nothing to do with him' (*CJ1*: 342). Furthermore, the rivalry between the brothers is overtly discussed in the journals, as if to further underline the narrated I's character as a romantic heroine: 'He [Fulton] never speaks to Alf except to quarrel with or result insult him' (*CJ1*: 346). What is more, in these entries one can find a short reference to Lewis Dystant, a former suitor, who apparently has been 'drinking hard' and who tells the narrated I that 'his love for me had ruined his life' (*CJ1*: 344). He is even quoted saying that he can never love again because the narrated I is not 'any ordinary girl' and that he shall 'never meet anyone like [her] again' (*CJ1*: 344).

Finally, the actual two suitors story begins in the February 2, 1897 entry, after the foundations for it have been laid by the aid of Ed's brothers. The narrated I receives a love letter from Ed Simpson that is quoted in the journals probably because of its ornate style. Ed confesses that he has thought of the narrated I 'ever since our first meeting' and that 'his "former fancy has deepened into an uncontrollable passion"' (*CJ1*: 352–353). The narrated I is 'so amazed' that she nearly drops the letter while reading it (*CJ1*: 352). Although the narrator assures the readers that she was not aware of Ed's feelings, she quickly begins to weigh the pros and cons of a possible engagement: 'I *might* learn to care for him. He is a handsome fellow, clever and educated; out tastes in many respects are very similar, and *if* I cared for him it would be a very suitable arrangement' (*CJ1*: 353; emphases original). Echoing the discourse of making a suitable match common in for instance Jane Austen's novels, the style here is indeed far from the passionate outbursts of romance fiction and closer to the notion of marriage as a calculated business arrangement.

While contemplating whether she could marry Ed or not, the narrated I continues her 'lovely moonlit drives' with Alf (*CJ1*: 357). This foreshadows Ed's role as the wrong suitor as well as their future engagement, which is already hinted at in the May 3, 1897 entry: 'He [Ed] expects to be home in six weeks. I rather dread his coming. I shall have to decide a certain matter once for all – and I am finding it hard to decide' (*CJ1*: 365). It is not unclear that the engagement is doomed to fail in the

narrative, as the narrated I's enjoyment of her drives with Alf are depicted side by side with her hesitation and dread of Ed's home-coming.

The entry of June 30, 1897 is the first one of the long retrospective entries that depict the two suitors narrative. This entry recounts the events leading up to Ed's proposal and the narrated I's acceptance, and her almost immediate regret over the decision. It is several handwritten pages long and occurs towards the beginning of the second unpublished volume (1897–1910), which marks a break in the narrative of the whole journal and the inception of a new entity. Indeed, a novel kind of version of the narrated I is being created through writing. The narrator overtly contemplates the change in the autobiographical I while writing an account of the events in retrospect. The narrator states that 'I do not know if I can write down a lucid account of the events and motives that have led me to this' (*CJ1*: 368). Later in the journals, the retrospective style becomes such a commonplace practice that there is no need for a caveat of this kind. The entry is wholly dedicated to describing the other suitor, Ed Simpson, and it recounts Ed's courting the narrator, finally proposing to her, the narrator's growing repulsion towards him and her realisation that she has made the wrong choice by accepting his offer.

What strikes me as most interesting in this entry are not the actual events, but the narrator's portrayal of them. The entry begins with the burial of the old self of the journal's protagonist and the creation of a new persona. Here the narrating I lucidly distances herself from the narrated I. For the first time in the journals it is acknowledged that the two parts of the autobiographical I do not simply coincide in the text:

> The girl who wrote on June 3rd is as dead as if the sod were heaped over her – dead past the possibility of any resurrection. I cannot realize that *I* was ever *she*. And indeed, I was not. … *I* am not Maud Montgomery at all. I feel as if *I* must have sprung suddenly into existence and *she* were an altogether different person who lived long ago and had nothing at all in common with the new *me*. (*CJ1*: 368; emphases original)

The narrator seems to have trouble describing the narrated I in a traditional way. This is marked by the continuous contrasting of the pronouns 'I' and 'she', which are also emphasised in the text by the use of italics. The text reflects on the dissonance of the past and present versions of the narrating and narrated Is and also on how hard it is to unify the textual and the real world representations of the autobiographical self, to the extent that the narrator admits that 'what or who I am now I do not know' (*CJ1*: 368).

Striking in this passage is also the imagery of death and rebirth. The narrator goes as far as pronouncing the death of the old narrating I – describing a more fundamental change, for it is not only the narrated I who has changed – by stating that 'the girl who *wrote* on June 3rd is … dead past the possibility of any resurrection' (*CJ1*: 368; emphasis added). She acknowledges that first, even the writing I of the journals has changed, and second, that she has altered so drastically that a new persona for both the narrating and narrated I must be created. Although there is no hope of resurrecting the old protagonist, a new one has already emerged, since the narrator mentions a 'new *me*' who has 'sprung into existence' (*CJ1*: 368; emphasis original). Fundamentally at work here, then, is the creation of a new fictional character who is needed in order to narrate the two suitors plot. The narrator marks the break from the old 'me' and advances to describe the adventures of a romantic heroine in the midst of a turbulent affair.

While describing the beginning of her relationship with Ed, the narrator offers a portrayal of the narrated I and her romantic history. According to the June 30, 1897 entry, she has 'never *really* loved anyone although [she has] had several violent fancies' (*CJ1*: 368; emphasis original). The statement initially strikes me as odd, for nowhere in the earlier entries can this be observed. Instead of descriptions of 'violent fancies', the teenage entries paint a picture of a flirting, fancy-free girl who plays with men and expects a similar carefree and frivolous attitude form her beaux. As discussed in the previous chapter, love is never at issue in the early journal entries, quite the opposite. Thus, it is easy to agree with the narrator's claim that 'it was not in me to love as *some* people seem to do in real life and *all* in novels' (*CJ1*: 368; emphases original).

Since the narrator is constructing a certain kind of romantic portrait of the narrated I, the best explanation for the inconsistency is that if there were any entries that dealt with the 'violent fancies', they were most likely edited later and omitted by Montgomery in order to give more prominence to the two suitors story.[74] Furthermore, since Montgomery begins the passionate tale of the two suitors in this entry, referring to 'violent fancies' fits the style picked for the forthcoming story. In this sense, it is not relevant whether this statement is inconsistent with the actual earlier journal text or not – this is how Montgomery wants the readers to remember and picture her earlier love life at this point in the journal's narrative. She also makes sure that passionate romance is at the centre of attention when the two suitors story commences.

74 See for example the discussion in chapter 2 on Lewis Dystant. It is also possible that self-censoring might have prevented Montgomery from writing about her love affairs in the first place.

Buss (1994: 93–94) draws attention to the literariness of Montgomery's account by observing how she refers to the act of writing by herself and others. An example of this tendency is the above-mentioned quotation where the narrator states that it was not in her to love as people do 'in novels' (*CJ1*: 368). Buss's reading of the two suitors entries emphasises the importance of the writer's identity to Montgomery and its development in the journals. This definitely shows in the way Montgomery's diary influences her fiction and vice versa. Not only are the two suitors entries heavily fictionalised, but Montgomery also transfers material from the journals directly onto her novels – an easy task, since the journals are so literary in themselves. Indeed, Epperly (1992: 146) aptly points out that passages in the journals 'sound very much like the literary works that influenced [Montgomery] powerfully'.

For instance, Montgomery's failed engagement with Ed and her embarrassment over breaking it off have clearly been the model for the events in the autobiographical novel of *Emily's Quest* (1927), the last of the *Emily* trilogy.[75] In the novel Emily promises to marry an older man, Dean Priest, while thinking that her childhood friend and love Teddy Kent does not care for her. Some of the passages in *Emily's Quest* depicting Emily's engagement to Dean as well as the aftermath of the break-up are taken almost word-for-word from the journals. For instance, in the long June 30, 1897 entry, in which Montgomery retrospectively depicts the events leading up to her accepting Ed's offer, the narrated I's desperation is expressed thus:

> Ambitious! I could laugh! Where is my ambition now? What does the word mean? What is it like to be ambitious? To feel that life is before you, a fair, unwritten white page when you may inscribe your name in letters of success? … I *once* knew what it was to feel so!' (*CJ1*: 377–378; emphasis original)

This paragraph goes into the novel as such, although there it occurs before Emily gets engaged to Dean (*EQ*: 55–56). However, since being situated in the chapter in which Dean trashes Emily's novel, the excerpt foreshadows their unsuccessful engagement later in the novel.[76]

Emily also states in a conversation with Dean during their engagement that 'I thought you didn't want me to write any more stories … You've never seemed to like

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75 Gammel (2005a: 141) also notes this by stating that Montgomery transferred her experience with Ed and her fear of marriage – and the resulting loss of career – to the *Emily* trilogy.

76 Epperly (1992: 147) analyses the presentation of Emily's relationship with Dean and Teddy at length in her study and she concludes that 'Montgomery's apparently conventional fairy-tale plot is a peculiarly wry and complex commentary on the alternatives and possibilities available to a woman'.

the fact of my writing' (*EQ*: 84). In the journal, this role is not reserved to Ed after all, but to Herman, of whom the narrator states: '[H]e seemed to hate my ambition' (*CJ1*: 410). As is common to Montgomery, autobiographical material transferred to fiction is used as seen fit for the purposes of the story. Additionally, several sentences from the entries depicting Montgomery's relationship with Herman go into the 1931 novel *A Tangled Web* (see for instance *CJ1*: 378). Indeed, Montgomery mentions reading over the Herman entries while preparing the typescript copy of her journals in the August 2, 1931 entry: 'The slowness of the process allows the details to "sink in" to such an extent that I seem actually to be *living* them all again' (*SJ4*: 145; emphasis original).

The June 30, 1897 entry about Ed presents a polished narrative that could be out of a novel intended to entice the readers. An appealing story of a well-meaning heroine is told, in which her desperate situation as a lonely schoolmarm accounts for her actions – accepting Ed's offer – and thus ensures the readers' sympathies:

> I wanted love and protection. Life at times lately had worn a somewhat sombre aspect to my forward-looking eyes. … My health had not been at all good all this spring and I felt tired and discouraged. I had had to work far too hard in school all winter and I was run-down and inclined to take a rather morbid view of my prospects. (*CJ1*: 369)

Montgomery is careful not to portray herself as someone who only plays with men's feelings and acts frivolously, although all things considered her conduct must have been questionable at times. The tone of voice in the two suitors entries could not be farther from the tone of the teenage entries, in which the narrated I was portrayed as a carefree minx, and love and marriage were not weighed in such utilitarian terms as now in relation to Ed: 'Ed was clever; he was studying for one of the learned professions and consequently his wife would have a good social position and a life according to my tastes' (*CJ1*: 368).

Right from the beginning, however, Ed's unsuitability as a suitor is underlined as the narrator remarks her family's objections towards him: 'I knew my people would not favour the match for two reasons – Ed is a Baptist and is also my second cousin' (*CJ1*: 369). Nevertheless, this remark, although emphasising Ed's role as the wrong suitor, only further succeeds in presenting the narrated I in a good light, since her altruistic behaviour demonstrates that she does not only think of herself when making a decision: 'I knew that in deciding to marry Edwin Simpson I was probably making considerable trouble for myself' (*CJ1*: 369). The narrated I is

characterised as someone who apparently hopes for the best and genuinely believes in her decision, which thus redeems her later 'bad' behaviour: 'I decided if, when he came home, I thought I could care enough for him I would accept him. … Ed was very attentive – I was pleased – flattered – God knows what – anyhow I felt quite sure I could care for him' (*CJ1*: 369).[77]

Next, the events leading up to the wrong decision are very dramatically narrated: 'Tuesday night came – June 8th – a date that marks the boundary line between two lives for me' (*CJ1*: 369). It is noteworthy that Montgomery is very precise with the dates, as if to ensure the readers that her tale is indeed an accurate document of the events and based on facts alone. However, the story is laden with familiar romantic imagery – a moonlit night and an optimistic heroine – at the end of which the narrated I finally manages to 'stammer out' that she will be Ed's wife (*CJ1*: 369). Everything seems 'like a dream' to the narrated I, but not the right kind of dream: 'I did not feel at all unhappy – but neither did I feel happy – certainly not as a girl should feel who had just parted from the man she had promised to marry' (*CJ1*: 370). Appropriately, immediately after this, the wrongness of the suitor is slowly revealed in the narrative, with all due dramatic suspense.

Describing the wrong suitor, Ed Simpson, properly for the first time in the June 30, 1897 entry, the narrator does not understate his negative qualities. He is overtly portrayed as 'Mr Wrong' in every possible way: he is 'conceited', 'self-conscious', 'a restless, nervous mortal', who twitches and talks too much and even causes 'physical repulsion' in the narrated I (*CJ1*: 370–371).[78] The narrated I's characteristics are compared to those of Ed: 'I reminded myself that I could not expect to find him perfect when I was a very imperfect creature myself' (*CJ1*: 370), which tallies with Buss's observations on how the two suitors convention equals women's self-development with the right man. However, despite all this reasoning, the narrator fatally states: 'But I was yet to realize that there is a higher law than common-sense after all – the law of natural instinct which I had utterly disregarded in my practical arrangement of matters' (*CJ1*: 370).

Hence, it is especially the physical unsuitability that is highlighted as the central reason for the narrated I's repulsion towards Ed and his role as the wrong suitor. Instead of emphasising the lack of love in their relationship, the narrator portrays

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77 The narrating I and the narrated I of Montgomery's journals often seem to share features of both fallible and self-deluded narrators and characters (see Pettersson 2015: 110–112).

78 Physical repulsion is also later in the journal connected to the relationship with Nate Lockhart (see *SJ2*: 203).

Ed as the other suitor's, Herman's, total opposite: an unerotic and strikingly passionless suitor. Ed's kisses 'roused absolutely no more feeling in me than if another girl had been kissing me' (*CJ1*: 371).[79] 'By the middle of June' the narrated I begins to 'recover from [her] strange feeling of unreality' and she then realises, on 'the night of the 17th of June', that she decidedly dislikes Ed's caresses (*CJ1*: 371). What is more, she shrinks from Ed's 'embrace and kiss':

> I was suddenly in the clutches of an icy horror. … I was literally terrified at the repulsion which quivered in every nerve of me at his touch. It seemed as if something that had been dormant in me all my life had suddenly wakened and shook me with a passion of revolt against my shackles. (*CJ1*: 371)

Montgomery seems to be stating something significant here with far-reaching consequences for the narrative of the journals. It is not only an unhappy relationship that is under examination. Additionally, the narrated I's reaction to her engagement works as a symbol for the narrator's essential impossibility to adapt to the mechanisms of a traditional romance narrative, in which the heroine fights several obstacles, quite likely has to choose between two suitors, but finally receives her prize in the form of the right suitor and marriage. The narrator seems not merely to describe the horror of noticing that she is engaged to the wrong man, but also the inconceivability of the conventional romance plot in general. 'Revolting against her shackles', which echoes Rousseau's famous sentence 'Man is born free, and everywhere he is in shackles' (*The Social Contract*: 49), the narrated I is a hopelessly indecisive heroine who has made an unfortunate choice, but more importantly a literary heroine who is trapped in a storyline that cannot function properly.

For Montgomery, the conventional romance plot simply does not work, no matter how much she tries to employ it with the aid of romantic literary conventions. In romance of this kind, something is always amiss. Montgomery seems to be aware of the problems with the conventional romance plot, as Epperly (1992: 178) suggests. In her opinion, the problems relate to the fact that 'jealousy and possessiveness are violent and all-consuming; friendship and equality are tepid in terms of conventional romance' (Epperly 1992: 178 quoting Kreps 1990: 145–154). Rachel Blau DuPlessis

79 Montgomery is protecting her later reputation here by this reference to her dislike for caresses with her own sex (see chapter 6). Analysed in the light of Montgomery's depiction of female romance, this section of physical repulsion with Ed could be read in terms of the narrated I's inability to succumb to conventional romance. Notably, in the August 2, 1931 entry, the narrator refers to kissing men with similar vocabulary: 'I … had had beaux galore ever since I was fifteen.… Most of them had kissed me occasionally. And a very boring and silly performance I thought it at best and at worst very nauseating' (*SJ4*: 145).

(1985: 5) points to such problems in the romance plot by stating that 'as a narrative pattern, the romance plot muffles the main female character, represses quest, valorizes heterosexual as opposed to homosexual ties, incorporates individuals with couples as a sign of their personal and narrative success'. DuPlessis (1985: 5) concludes by a definitive verdict: 'In short, the romance plot, broadly speaking, is a trope for the sex-gender system as a whole.'

Ultimately, then, the entry of June 30, 1897 accomplishes to tell more of the narrated I than of 'Mr Wrong'. The picture of her is constructed by Victorian stereotypes, which along with the hyperbolic style seem to cover the hollowness and impossibility of the romance narrative. The narrated I is portrayed as a tortured heroine, who has made the wrong choice and now has to suffer in silence: 'My martyrdom had begun. … I went up to my room saying under my breath "God help me"' (*CJ1*: 372). The narrator even overtly admits that 'there is, no doubt, a ludicrous and absurd aspect of the case but I am unfortunately incapable of seeing it. I see – and feel – only the tragedy of it' (*CJ1*: 373). Indeed, tragedy is the style of choice in the June 30, 1897 entry, which affects the write-up of the story. The narrated I is seen from the outside as a character in a tragic romance novel and is thus marked with Victorian Gothic attributes: 'A more wretched-looking creature it would have been hard to find. I was as pale as a corpse, with black circles under my dull tired eyes' (*CJ1*: 372).

The narrated I is also portrayed according to the tradition of the consumptive heroine with clear physical clues easily recognisable to readers familiar with this tradition. At a party with Ed, the narrated I reacts into 'a wild, feverish fit of gayety': 'My eyes were burningly bright, my cheeks hot and crimson' (*CJ1*: 375). Looking back over the weeks of being engaged to Ed and spending time with him, the narrator states: 'I am thin and pale, hollow-eyed and nervous' (*CJ1*: 377). All these qualities underline the heroine's tragic characteristics by alluding to the physical effects of tuberculosis, although the readers know she is not actually ill. The consumptive heroine is a literary motif, one with which Montgomery was more than familiar, having read about it in novels, experienced it in real life and written about it in her own novels.[80] As Melissa Prycer (2005: 262) notes, consumption was one of the most prominent literary metaphors of the nineteenth century, often connected to creativity and artistry. Thus, the narrated I is *like* a consumptive heroine, beautiful in her suffering.

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80 Montgomery's mother and childhood friend died of tuberculosis. In her novels there are several characters who suffer from and die of tuberculosis, such as Emily's father in *Emily of New Moon* and Ruby Gillis in the *Anne* series.

Furthermore, the style and setting of the entry are thoroughly influenced by romantic conventions. The language is similar to the hyperbolic language of formula romance: 'Saturday morning I got up … with the hot, defiant passion of the previous night burned out to dull white ashes' (*CJ1*: 375). However, the rhetoric simultaneously employs more powerful and violent images drawn from the gothic tradition:

> I could strike my reflected face there in the mirror – I could lash my bare shoulders with unsparing hand to punish myself for my folly. It would be a relief to inflict physical pain and thereby dull my mental agony. Sometimes I drop my pen and walk wildly up and down my room with clenched hands. (*CJ1*: 377)

The narrator plays with the idea of punishing the narrated I with physical pain and depicts her as an archetypal female gothic heroine with clenched hands walking up and down her room.

Lorna Drew's (1995) article on Montgomery's Emily novels' connection to Ann Radcliffe's well-known gothic novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) discusses aspects of what Drew terms 'the female gothic' (see also Moers 1977), most of which feature in the two suitors entries. According to Drew (1995: 19), the female gothic includes an engagement with nature and alternative worlds manifested in dreams, fantasies and visions and can be understood as a gothic sub-genre that documents female uneasiness with the social order.[81] In the two suitors story, it is also the narrator's uneasiness with the romance plot that is documented with the female gothic: 'In the evening Ed came. What a nightmare it seemed!' (*CJ1*: 374) The entire portrayal of the wrong suitor centres on the trope of a gothic nightmare.

What is more, the way the setting and the surroundings of the heroine are depicted reflect her misery in true gothic-romantic fashion. There seems to be a veil 'dropped between my soul and nature' (*CJ1*: 374), even though the weather conveniently changes in the narrative according to the mood swings of the narrated I. At one point in the entry of June 30, 1897, 'the rain of a moist odorous June evening is falling on the roof', but eventually the sombre tone returns: 'It is dark outside now and the rain is beating on the pane like ghostly finger-tips playing a weird threnody' (*CJ1*: 377–378). The narrated I feels that 'in a world of beauty and gladness I am only a black unsightly blot of misery' (*CJ1*: 378). This misery is in accordance with the portrayal of 'Mr Wrong'. Hence, it is obligatory that the narrated I is described

81 Montgomery employs the female gothic also when depicting female romance, as in the death entry of her closest female friend, Frederica Campbell; see chapter 5.

being as miserable as her surroundings, since the entry is dedicated to the portrayal of the relationship with Edwin Simpson.

After this lengthy entry of June 30, 1897 follows another one in which the two suitors plot is suspended. It offers a sort of respite for the readers in between the action-packed entries. Instead of narrating events, the entry of October 7, 1897 concentrates on inner contemplation and analyses how the unhappy engagement has changed the narrated I. After the Biblical beginning – '"Harvest is ended and summer is gone"' (*CJ1*: 378)[82] – the narrator states:

> I have learned to look below the surface comedy of life into the tragedy underlying it. I have become *humanized* – no longer an isolated, selfish unit, I have begun to feel myself *one with my kind* – to see deeper into my own life and the lives of others. I have begun to *realize* life – to realize what someone has called 'the infinite sadness of living'. (*CJ1*: 378–379; emphases original)

Once more an entry begins with self-reflection whose effect is much greater than merely offering insights into the narrated I's mindset and development. Rather, what is at play here is subtly providing guidelines to the readers. The narrator overtly states how the storyline of the journal is shifting from comedy to tragedy, from the teenage romances to more substantial adult ones, which also seems to denote that it will become 'deeper' and more objective, since the narrated I is now connected to other people, humanity and life in general. An important marker is the final quote of 'the infinite sadness of living' which, if nothing else, transfers the narrative to the realms of a sad life story.

Montgomery goes on to write about her religious beliefs and local gossip in the October 7, 1897 entry, because she does not want to write about Ed, even though at this point she is still engaged to him. In the next entry of January 22, 1898, the narrator even confesses that 'I *could not* say anything about it [the affair with Ed] in my last entry because I was in the worst possible state of mind over it and even to allude to the subject would have hurt me like a rude touch on a raw wound' (*CJ1*: 385; emphasis original). However, nature nevertheless reflects this story mode in the October 7, 1897 entry and works as a backdrop for the narrated I's sad mood: 'But it is autumn and beautiful as everything is it is the beauty of decay – the sorrowful beauty of the end' (*CJ1*: 378).

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82 According to the notes of *The Complete Journals* this refers to Jeremiah 8:20, which states: 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved' (*CJ1*: 378).

The narrated I is as forlorn as ever, 'drifting about, tempest-tossed and mocked by fate', and quoting from *The Love Letters of a Wordly Woman* (1891) by Lucy Lane Clifford, the narrator states that 'my outlook is indeed gloomy at present, bounded and narrowed in. … "I feel like a prisoner who has shut the door on all possibilities"' (*CJ1*: 382). The narrator mentions having also read *The Gates Ajar* (1868) by Elizabeth Phelps, which according to the editors of *The Complete Journals*, is a 'pious and sentimental treatment of a girl who has lost her lover in the Civil War' (*CJ1*: 382). Indeed, what follows next in the journals is a sentimental treatment of the narrated I losing her lover – not Ed Simpson, however, but Herman Leard. The tragedy with Herman thus stems from the unhappy culmination of that love.

3.3 ENTER 'MR RIGHT'

When the narrative switches from 'Mr Wrong' to depicting the events with 'Mr Right', or Herman Leard, its tone moves from melancholia and brooding to action and exhilaration. At the beginning of the January 22, 1898 entry, which begins the story of the right suitor, the narrator states: 'I came to Bedeque and at once found myself whirled into a life the very antipodes of that which I had been living' (*CJ1*: 385). Swirling among the events, the narrated I is depicted as caught in a whirlwind of passionate love. Although this entry leads to introducing Herman Leard into the storyline, most of it deals with the continuing engagement with Ed: the narrator is supposedly 'going to take a good dose of confession regarding my miserable affair with Edwin Simpson' (*CJ1*: 385). The narrated I's familiar anxiety over the affair is repeated, '"I can never marry him – *never*, *never*, *never*!"' (*CJ1*: 385; emphases original), but more interesting in this entry is the foreshadowing of the appearance of the other suitor.

The January 22, 1898 entry is thus rather bizarre. It is laden with gaps, hints and foreshadowing and is controlled with an iron fist by Montgomery. It is a short retrospective entry that describes cursorily Montgomery's winter 1897 spent teaching in Lower Bedeque boarding with the Leard family, who were prominent farmers. During this time, Montgomery became acquainted with Herman Leard, the eldest son of the family, while being secretly engaged to Edwin Simpson. However, in order to prolong the climax of the story, Herman is only mentioned in passing in the January 22, 1898 entry: 'The elder boy, Herman, is about 26, slight, rather dark, with magnetic blue eyes' (*CJ1*: 388). The narrator is careful not to reveal too much at this stage and she only concludes: 'He [Herman] does not impress one as handsome at first … but in the end one thinks him so' (*CJ1*: 388). The entry ends

in a curious remark in which the narrator states that this entry is like '"the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out"',[83] and ponders whether she will be able to narrate it again with Hamlet in it (*CJ1*: 388). As this paragraph occurs at the end of the entry, it is likely that Montgomery added it in her rewriting of the events in the official ledgers to emphasise the dramatic significance of Herman Leard. It nevertheless well demonstrates that Montgomery was acutely aware of using tragedy as a mould for her narration.

As noted above, the two suitors theme begins in the narrative long before the other suitor, Herman, even enters the stage. Similarly in the January 22, 1898 entry, overt mentions of Herman are scarce, but the narrator carries the story forward by carefully placed enigmatic sentences that tease the reader: 'Marriage is a different thing to me now. I have at least realized what a *hell* it would be with a man I did not love – and yes, what a *heaven* with one I did! Where and how have I learned this last, question you? Ah, I can't tell you that yet!' (*CJ1*: 385; emphases original)[84] Herman and Ed, the readers know after having read the whole story, are juxtaposed as heaven and hell and they are positioned in relation to marriage, quite appropriately within the two suitors convention.[85] The narrator directly addresses the readers only to inform them that information is withdrawn and postponed. The passionate romance with Herman, the culmination of the story following in the next entry, is only hinted at to build up suspension – again very much a literary technique.

Curiously enough, for one who does not know what will follow, the narrator discusses the marriage of an 'ancient spinster', Jessie Fraser, she knew in Belmont, who apparently had a precarious past.[86] The narrator asks, 'I wonder what a woman *does* feel like who has such a past as hers. Is there any sweetness in the memory of her sin – or is it all bitterness?' (*CJ1*: 385; emphasis original) This is another instance of foreshadowing, only more subtle, that hints at the narrator's own almost sinful behaviour that will be narrated in the subsequent entry. Readers can observe how exceedingly artful Montgomery's plot construction is. The narrated I has already been presented as a suffering heroine in relation to Ed. In the next entry of April

83 According to the footnote in *The Complete Journals*, this is a misquote from Walter Scott (*CJ1*: 388).

84 Here Montgomery's awareness of her audience is evident. Why would she postpone information from herself that she already knows? In fact, it is the future readers that she is addressing.

85 Moreover, Montgomery seems to be echoing a commonly held attitude to the essence of marriage, at least according to Rothman (1984: 60): '"There can be no medium in the wedded state. It must be either happy or miserable," expressed an idea that appears with striking regularity in the writings of early nineteenth century men and women'.

86 Montgomery mentions Jessie Fraser already in the entry of October 27, 1896 (*CJ1*: 332).

8, 1898, a presentation of 'the fallen woman' is created, which is thus indirectly foreshadowed by this discussion of an actual one in the January 22, 1898 entry. Furthermore, the fallen woman motif is addressed subsequently in the journals, which attests to its importance to Montgomery in her examination of the sexual morals of the time. In the January 28, 1912 entry, another such woman is mentioned, called Mamie Simpson: 'Mamie went under. She has trodden ever since the way that takes hold on hell' (*CJ2*: 394).[87] It is the fate of these 'fallen women' to tread the way of regret and shame, and once beginning her own tale of almost straying from the path, Montgomery does not understate its poignancy.

Due to the enigmatic foreshadowing in the January 22, 1898 entry, the following long entry of April 8, 1898 seems to tell the whole truth of the two suitors affair and reveal everything, when in fact it is as constructed as the rest of the narrative. After over a two-month gap in the journal, the narrator opens the April 8, 1898 entry in a style that resembles a witness's testimony: 'I am going to write it out fully and completely, even if every word cuts me to the heart', and she assures her readers that the entry is 'a faithful record' (*CJ1*: 389).[88] Importantly, the narrator emphasises that what she will describe is a 'stormy, passion-wrung life', so that the readers already know what to expect. What follows is an account of the sudden death of Montgomery's grandfather and the newest turns in her relationship with Ed. It is not until the eighth page in the published version of the entry (*CJ1*: 395) that the narrator begins recounting the actual affair with Herman. However, there are hints along the way during which the narrator calls Herman 'the other man', not yet revealing his real name (*CJ1*: 393). Suspension is again tactically employed before the climax of the story – indeed, perhaps of the conventional romantic narrative of the journals as a whole.

The entry begins dramatically with a description of the setting: 'It is just after dark; the shadows have gathered thickly over the old white hills and around the old quiet trees. The last red stains of the lingering sunset have faded out of the west and

87 The January 28, 1912 entry is a long one about the people in Cavendish, Montgomery's home village, and it includes other references to the ways people were not always able to abide by the sexual moral codes of the day. For instance, Montgomery writes that one man '"had to get married" as the country phrase goes' (*CJ2*: 383). Furthermore, in the September 4, 1919 entry, Montgomery reminisces about a friend of her youth, Norman Campbell, who contracted syphilis and went mad (*SJ2*: 342). She ends the entry by stating: '"The wages of sin is death." The life and death of Norman Campbell was a terrible commentary on that merciless old text' (*SJ2*: 342).

88 This kind of style that claims legal accuracy is familiar from Montgomery's earlier accounts of romance; see chapter 2. The April 8, 1898 entry is indeed a complete record as it is 38 handwritten pages long in the unpublished manuscript (volume 2).

the dull gray clouds have settled down over the horizon again' (*CJ1*: 388). Not only depicting the actual scenery, the narrator paints a picture of the end of an affair: the passionate red of the sunset has faded out just as the narrated I's romance with Herman, and the gray clouds have entered her life again after the culmination of that romance. The narrated I is even equated with her dead mother once more by a lengthy reminiscence of seeing her mother lying in the coffin and touching her face: 'My mother had been beautiful and Death, so cruel in all else, had spared the delicate outline of feature, the long silken lashes brushing the hollow cheek' (*CJ1*: 390).[89] This reminiscence works as a convenient link to the previous entries in which the narrated I was portrayed as a consumptive heroine – Montgomery's mother died of tuberculosis – and forms a parallel by its motif of dying and rebirth.

After describing the memory of her dead mother, the narrator develops the theme by mentioning her grandfather's funeral and then lapses into a rambling section, which is almost the only instance of uncontrolled writing in the entries on the two suitors. Not surprisingly, this section was omitted from the abridged *Selected Journals* (*SJ1*: 205), because it stops the flow of narration and seemingly does not further the story. However, it offers a rare insight into the act of writing, in which the narrating I or Montgomery seemingly loses control over the threads of the story.

These two paragraphs surface in the middle of an otherwise carefully structured narrative. The narrator comments on her narration and acknowledges that what is being told is indeed a story, not the truth or a reflection of real life. The tone is almost metafictional: 'I must stop this wild wondering – the echo of my confused, troubled thoughts – and begin my story – pick up the dropped threads and go on with it – this miserable life story of mine that can never have a happy ending' (*CJ1*: 391). Here the narrator consciously leads the narrative in a certain direction, that is, towards an unhappy ending. Since this is the only instance in the depiction of the two suitors affair where the narrator seems overtly to admit the constructed nature of the narrative – 'this miserable life story of mine' – and the style of writing is improvisational and even impressionistic, it would be tempting to conclude that here one is able to get a peek behind the mask of the writer of the journal, Montgomery herself.

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89 Gammel (2005a: 143) also acknowledges that Montgomery equates herself with her dead mother in the two suitors entries. According to her, 'the image of the eroticized dead girl [was] popular in Victorian visual art' (Gammel 2005a: 143). Thus, depicting the reminiscence of Montgomery's mother in the coffin in a romance narrative, the narrator evokes the Victorian obsession with death and its close connection to romance.

However, this seemingly random part of the entry is also part of the narrative whole (see also Simons 1990: 34). The rambling thoughts of the narrating I are like an interior monologue of the suffering, gothic heroine encountered in the earlier entries:

> I could lie down tonight and die, unregretfully, nay, gladly, if I were sure that death indeed meant *rest* and was not merely the portal to another life – such a one as this perhaps – or a better – but at all events *life* – and, that means of action and thought and feeling – perhaps *memory* as well – anything but the rest I crave. (*CJ1*: 391; emphases original)

The fact that the topic of her contemplation is death is not surprising as it tallies with the theme of death, rebirth and tragic love. After this outburst, a stanza from Longfellow's dramatic poem 'The Golden Legend' is quoted in which the speaker of the poem – Prince Henry – sighs much like the narrator of Montgomery's journal: 'Rest, rest! Oh, give me rest and peace!' (*CJ1*: 391).[90] The narrator quoting Longfellow in the middle of a story highly influenced by the romantic tradition is more than fitting.

Before introducing Herman, the narrator cleans the slate and depicts the end of the affair with Ed: 'So one day early in March I sat down and in a fit of desperation wrote him [Ed] a letter – a wild, frantic epistle it was, but it made my meaning clear. I told him I had ceased to care for him and could not marry him' (*CJ1*: 392). Although during her secret relationship with Herman the narrated I is still engaged to Ed – since the events are narrated in retrospect in the journal –, on the level of the plot the narrator is careful to mention the breaking off of the engagement *before* she begins the tale of Herman, so as to make the narrated I appear in a positive light. Ed is presented as being devastated, as all the other jilted suitors in the journals before him: 'He declared he could *never* forget – that love with him was eternal' and he writes a 'heart-broken letter' to the narrated I (*CJ1*: 392; emphasis original). In order to direct the narrative towards Herman and to connect these two suitors, the narrator depicts Ed's suspicions over the narrated I seeing another man. Naturally, as the narrator confesses, 'by this time there *was* another man' (*CJ1*: 393; emphasis original).

Once again, the heroine's trapped position within a romantic narrative that cannot function properly is alluded to with a vocabulary of anger and frustration:

90 Montgomery quotes the stanza almost correctly. Only in one line 'weight' has turned into 'night'. See for instance http://www.gutenberg.org/files/10490/10490-h/10490-h.htm (March 19, 2015) for the whole poem.

'If I could have thrown his [Ed's] letter to the floor and set my foot on it – if I could have torn it to shreds and scattered to the winds … if I could have shrieked aloud … it would have been an unutterable relief' (*CJ1*: 394). The narrated I feels 'like a wild creature, caught in a trap and biting savagely at its captor's hand' (*CJ1*: 394), and the readers can almost sense her desperate position both within the events of the story as well as on the narrative level. Revealingly, the narrator admits that 'I am sick of writing about it [relationship with Ed] and am glad to drop the subject, even though the next I must take up will be still more racking' (*CJ1*: 394–395).

After all the suspension in the narrative flow in the April 8, 1898 entry, one sentence marks the beginning of the plot which features Herman, or 'Mr Right'. The narrating I states: 'Now for "Hamlet" with Hamlet in!' (*CJ1*: 395). Indeed, what follows resembles Shakespeare's tragedies more than a diary entry. However, even before this sentence, the previous paragraph paints an image of a landscape fit for passionate romance:

> If I had known, that evening last fall when I crossed the bay to Bedeque and idly watched the great burnished disk of the sun sink below the violet rim of the water, and the purple shadows clustering over distant shores what was before me I think I would have turned then and there and gone no further. (*CJ1*: 395)

As if simultaneously referring to her later dilemma of whether to succumb to passion or to 'go no further', the backdrop to the story with 'Mr Right' is presented as one of highly romantic vistas. The mention of a setting sun also reminds of the beginning of the entry, in which a 'lingering' sunset was depicted (cf. *CJ1*: 388).

The entry of April 8, 1898 on 'Mr Right' is actually surprisingly similar to the one on Ed Simpson, who is characterised as 'Mr Wrong' in the June 30, 1897 entry. Certainly, it includes more passionate rendezvous and words of love, but structurally and stylistically both 'Mr Right' and 'Mr Wrong' are rather equally treated in the journals. For instance, after exclaiming in a grandiose style that the story will now present Hamlet, the male lead, the narrator offers an account of her past love life: 'Up to the time of my going to Bedeque I had never *loved*. … Of course, I have had some attacks, more or less severe, of "calf-love," and fleeting, violent fancies for some men' (*CJ1*: 395; emphasis original). The wording in this paragraph is almost identical to the June 30, 1897 entry, in which the narrator confesses: 'I had never *really* loved anyone although I have had several violent fancies that did not last very long' (*CJ1*: 368; emphasis original). It is likely that Montgomery wrote both of these entries – and the whole two suitors story – long after the events had taken place, probably when she was preparing the journal ledgers from 1919 onwards. Thus, the

beginning of the story of both Ed and Herman is introduced with a corresponding glance at the narrated I's previous love affairs – a fact that Montgomery did not necessarily notice when writing about the events.

The narrator goes on: 'Although I had never really loved, still, like any other girl in the world, I suppose, I had an ideal – a visionary dream of the man I thought I *could* love' (*CJ1*: 395; emphasis original). Importantly, the narrated I is here portrayed in terms of normality – 'like any other girl in the world' –, which assures Montgomery's future audience that she is indeed 'normal' in the romantic sense and both has and entices passion in men.[91] On the other hand, referring to an ideal man of one's dreams hints that the story of Herman Leard is that of a fairy tale, in which Herman will play the part of the fairy prince, as well as the part of a tragic prince like Hamlet. Although the narrator underlines that Herman does not match the man of her dreams – by not being intellectual, handsome or her equal in birth and social position (*CJ1*: 396) –, in the narrative he is nevertheless an imaginary lover. Herman is a fantasy male, a rather flat character created by Montgomery that simply occupies the place of the romantic male lead in the journals (see also Gammel 2005a: 138), rather like Anne Shirley's suitor Roy Gardner in *Anne of the Island*, who is, as Epperly (1992: 72) puts it, 'a tailor-made, manufactured hero'.

A further instance of this fairy tale tendency is a picture cut from a magazine, pasted in the journals, under which Montgomery has written: 'As much like Herman Leard as if it were his photograph' (*CJ1*: 395).[92] Instead of pasting an actual photo of Herman into the journals, Montgomery portrays her literary lover with an illustration of a novel called *The Princess of Virginia* (1907) (Woster 2008:

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91 It is more than likely that Montgomery felt the need to recast herself as a sexual being in the light of the early twentieth-century sexualisation for the benefit of her modern readers (see also Gammel 2005a: 142). Sex and sexuality were not topics that Montgomery wanted to include and overtly write about in her journals (see e.g. Montgomery's comment on the 'sex novels' of the 1920s to her pen-pal Weber; *After Green Gables*: 162–163). However, both the two suitors affair as well as Montgomery's relationship with her fan Isabel Anderson (see chapter 6) are presented as proof that Montgomery was not morbid in lacking sexual passion, as defined by the sexologists of the 1920s and 1930s.

92 Based on what Gammel (2005a: 147) has noted about the historical circumstances of the affair between Herman and Montgomery, it is probable that Montgomery did not have any official standing with Herman. For instance, she was not notified of his death in 1899, but had to read about it in a newspaper (Gammel 2005a: 147). Thus, it is likely that Montgomery simply did not possess a photograph of Herman, which she could have pasted in the journal. In contrast, the journals do include a photograph of Edwin Simpson, to whom Montgomery was engaged.

2).[93] As Irene Gammel (2005a: 137) points out, the picture – as well as Herman himself – works as a fetish. What is more, it transfers the journal entry into the realms of a sentimental romance story about a fictional prince and princess called Herman Leard and Maud Montgomery, who are rather like Hamlet and Ophelia. Furthermore, since Montgomery was not able to see and peruse the picture until 1906–1907, the image definitely affected and guided her writing up of the events that had occurred decades earlier.[94]

The overall presentation of the Herman Leard affair is thus very dramatic – quite logically, since Montgomery is concocting the main romantic entry in the journals. The entry is structured with the aid of markers that guide the readers: '[T]he eleventh of November … marked the *first step* on a pathway of passion and pain'; 'The next Union night Herman went a step further'; and, 'Things went on thus … until the 28th of November came' (*CJ1*: 396–397, 399; emphasis original). Again, just as when writing about Ed, Montgomery is very precise with dates, in order to convince her readers that her account is based on facts.

Although supposedly factual, the style of the April 8, 1898 entry owes much to dime novels and sentimental romance stories. For instance, in the August 24, 1896 entry, the narrator remarks having read 'several "shilling shockings" by Bertha M. Clay and other of that ilk', which according to the notes of *The Complete Journal* were 'cheap romantic fiction … such as *A Mad Love* and *The Duke's Secret*' (*CJ1*: 327). Furthermore, at the end of the April 8, 1898 entry, Montgomery lists the books she has lately been reading and one of them is *The Quick or the Dead* (1888) by Amelie Rives, which 'deals with the hysterical passion of a young widow, fighting against her growing love of a new suitor', as characterised by the editors of the journals (*CJ1*: 410). Sentimental fiction thus affects the way Montgomery sees herself and writes about her life. The journal text is often influenced by clichés and conventions, as well as more sophisticated literary models. Indeed, the text itself can be clichéd and conventional at times.

Next in the April 8, 1898 entry, the narrator repeats the scene already included in the previous entry of January 22, 1898, in which the narrated I meets Herman for the first time. Whereas in the January 22, 1898 entry Herman was simply depicted as being 'about 26, slight, rather dark, with magnetic blue eyes' (*CJ1*: 388), in the

93 According to Woster (2008: 2–3), the picture Montgomery uses in her diary is from *The Ladies Home Journal*, in which the story was serialised between 1906 and 1907. The dust jacket of the book by C.N. and A.M. Williamson (1907) also includes this picture (Woster 2008: 2).

94 Since Montgomery did not begin writing her journal entries into the legal-sized ledgers until 1919 onwards, she probably had the picture saved elsewhere for over ten years.

April 8, 1898 entry, he is 'dark-haired and blue-eyed, with lashes as long and silken as a girl's. He was about 27 but looked younger and more boyish. I was not long in concluding that there was something wonderfully fascinating about his face' (*CJ1*: 396). Buss (1994: 88) aptly notes that 'one would expect that the relationship with Leard … would speak of a different passion, a different rhetoric' than that with Ed Simpson. Instead, as she points out, Montgomery 'introduces this relationship in very similar terms to the Simpson debacle … in the sense of a dramatic change in subjectivity' (Buss 1994: 88).

Indeed, the April 8, 1898 entry also begins with a depiction of rebirth, with attributes familiar from the previous entries: the narrated I is a 'pale, sad-eyed woman', a 'new creature, born of sorrow and baptized of suffering, who is the sister and companion of regret and hopeless longing' (*CJ1*: 389). Although Herman is more alluring as a lover, he is also the wrong suitor in some respects. The transformation in the narrated I is not positive, his influence over her is possessive and results in loss of control.

Even so, one of the most notable features in the April 8, 1898 entry is the symbolical juxtaposition of the two suitors as reason (Ed) and emotion (Herman). This is a more general tendency as all Montgomery's male suitors are characterised as either 'body' or 'intellect', for instance Oliver Macneill, who has sex appeal, and Nate Lockhart, who stimulates the narrated I intellectually. Interestingly, this common binary opposition is not used to position male and female qualities but two male characters. The characteristics of the two suitors are evident in this example of passion: '*Ed's* kisses at the best left me cold as ice – *Herman's* sent flame through every vein and fibre of my being' (*CJ1*: 397; emphases original).

Passion is a key notion in the entry on the whole. By describing strong physical desire, the narrator contrasts Herman with Ed, for, as we have seen, the entries on Ed depict a total lack of passion. Now, instead of feeling physical repulsion, the narrated I is described as experiencing physical attraction, which paves way to the portrayal of the fallen woman: 'I cannot tell what possessed me … our lips met in one long passionate pressure – a kiss of fire and rapture such as I had never in all my life experienced or imagined' (*CJ1*: 397*)*. Directly after this passionate outburst, however, the narrator reminds the narrated I of her possible downfall by exclaiming: '*This must not go on!*' (*CJ1*: 397; emphasis original).

Following this exclamation, the setting of the story is illustrated. As always in the journals, the lovers meet on a 'moonlit night' with the 'moonlight gleaming' (*CJ1*: 396–397). The secret lovers, Herman and the narrated I, ride the buggy coming back from church meetings and engage in intimate scenes in the sitting room or the

narrator's bedroom. Gammel (2005a: 136) notes that the rhetoric of Montgomery's journals is obsessed with frames and boundaries. The same can be said of the settings of the secret romance which are like stage sets in a play: the horse carriage, the sitting room, the bedroom – all confined and framed spaces.

The characters are then presented, especially Herman who until now has barely been mentioned. He is 'a very nice, attractive young animal' who lacks any intellectual qualities: 'He had no trace of intellect, culture, or education – no interest in anything beyond his farm and the circle of young people' (*CJ1*: 396). According to historical details, Montgomery's portrayal of Herman as a simple farmer is not accurate (see Rubio 2008 and Gammel 2005a).[95] However, in the journals he is a semi-fictional character whose role is to embody certain characteristics for the benefit of the story. It is noteworthy that on the whole, and especially when compared to the portrayal of 'Mr Wrong', Ed Simpson, the depiction of Herman is brief, which tallies well with his role as a rather hollow fantasy of a man. Gammel (2005a: 138) notes that Herman's representation is characterised by having been completely silenced. In comparison, Ed is marked by his speech: the narrator mentions that Ed 'spoke well', his letters are quoted in the diary, he has 'the Simpson habit of talking too much' and even some dialogue is attributed to him (*CJ1*: 369, 394, 371, 375).

However, in the final analysis, Herman's character is not completely silenced. In fact, in the April 8, 1898 entry, it is Herman's verbal commands and pleas that propel the story. For instance, luring the narrated I into caressing him, Herman states: 'Never mind reading any more' (*CJ1*: 398), and when bringing the narrated I flowers and chocolates, he says: 'Those are for you, Maud' (*CJ1*: 401). True, these are not exactly breath-taking statements, but for several occasions in the April 8 entry, Herman and the narrated I are depicted engaged in dialogues, often very heated ones significant for the story. They mainly battle over the boundaries of their relationship and succumbing to temptation – '"Herman, *go*," I cried. "Go – at once – *at once*, I say!" "Oh, *no*," he murmured' (*CJ1*: 406; emphases original) –, but they also discuss practical topics, such as the narrated I having her photograph taken for Herman and her eventual return to home (*CJ1*: 404–405, 406, 409).

On the other hand, the relationship between the narrated I and Herman is more often characterised by silence. Even though the two lovers engage in discussions, more than once their mutual scenes are marked by loss of voice and immobility. Right from the first romantic encounter, during which the lovers ride in a buggy and start embracing, the narrator states: 'So I did not move – I left my head on his

95 Notice, for instance, how the narrator portrays Herman as not being an intellectual or educated man. Even so, in almost every scene of the April 8, 1898 entry, he is depicted reading a book (*CJ1*: 397, 400, 402).

shoulder, voiceless, motionless, as we drove home in silence' (*CJ1*: 396). Driving together again the next night, the narrated I 'could *not* speak' (*CJ1*: 397; emphasis original). When spending time in the parlour with Herman, the narrated I's voice falters and 'for half an hour we sat there, without word or motion' (*CJ1*: 398). Thus, even in this more romantically and passionately satisfying tale of the right suitor, the narrator continues to examine the limitations of the romantic narrative. The heroine becomes silenced in the presence of the suitor, her individuality disappears, and there is nothing realistic in the interactions of the lovers. In fact, they are stuck in the hollow silence of the conventional romance plot.

Even though not completely silenced, Herman is definitely only characterised through negation, which further attests to his role as both the right and the wrong suitor. 'Even if I had been free Herman Leard was impossible, viewed as a husband. It would be the rankest folly to dream of marrying such a man' (*CJ1*: 397), the narrator states emphatically, carefully underlining that the narrated I is concerned with matrimonial possibilities, not only frivolous romance. Throughout the entry of April 8, 1898 and in any subsequent entries mentioning Herman, this view is repeated. The narrating I creates a myth of this imaginary lover, which serves the purpose of the overall narrative of the journals. In that myth Herman is a simple, narrow-minded farmer who is not marriage material. In the entry of July 10, 1898, for instance, the narrating I depicts Herman's letter as not very clever and having some visible lapses of grammar (*CJ1*: 415). What is Herman's role, then, if he is portrayed with so many qualities that would better fit 'Mr Wrong'? Despite his apparent unfitness and lack of heroic qualities, Herman has physical power. He has a face that is 'elusive, magnetic, haunting' (*CJ1*: 396). This suitor thus clearly stands for physical attraction in the story.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Herman's overflowing physical power also makes him a wrong suitor, since sexual passion was a dangerous issue in polite society in the late nineteenth century. Definitely it does not portray him as the man the narrated I could marry – in other words, the right suitor –, since sex belonged to married life alone, not before it, as Herman suggests with his behaviour. For Herman, the narrator thus adapts an entirely different tone compared to the entries that describe the narrating I's relationship with Ed. Instead of rationality and lack of passion, which is not good either, the narrative becomes heated with passion, but that of the dangerous kind.

The narrated I is struck by 'a spell' and by the 'mysterious, irresistible *influence* which Herman Leard exercised over [her]' (*CJ1*: 396; emphasis original). She is possessed by a power that is 'indescribable and overwhelming' (*CJ1*: 396) – a remark that does not quite tally with the lengthy description of the powerful passion that

follows in the rest of the entry. Hence, it is the narrated I's lack of control as well as its corporeality that characterises the relationship with 'Mr Right', as in this passage: 'I *loved* Herman Leard with a wild, passionate, unreasoning love that dominated my entire being and possessed me like a flame – a love I could neither quell nor control – a love that in its intensity seemed little short of absolute madness. Madness!' (*CJ1*: 397; emphasis original) The narrated I is possessed, thus beyond reason or self-control. She is equated with a madwoman or a hysteric who tries to break the boundaries of the late-Victorian society and demonstrates the kind of desire that women should not express.

Again the gothic elements play an important role in describing the narrating I's sensuality. She leads a 'double life', rather like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde in R.L. Stevenson's novella, and the narrator even exclaims that 'what I suffered that night between horror, shame and dread can never be told. Every dark passion in my nature seemed to have broken loose and run wild riot' (*CJ1*: 400), further underlining the duality of her character. Physical desire needs to be implemented in the story – it is its *primus motor* –, but the narrating I cannot describe it without the aid of a literary formula that moves the threatening phenomenon to a safer level. The gothic style and convention fit perfectly the ideology of passion as something dark and shameful, a trait that is to be controlled and not let loose. As Drew (1995: 22) aptly notes, coding female desire in ways that do not manifestly relate to the love story is one of the main functions of the female gothic.

In the portrayal of the affair, then, the norms of Victorian society are kept intact. Although the narrated I does not ultimately succumb to the dangerous passion, that is, sexual intercourse, she is nevertheless presented through the canvas of the fallen woman, which adds a moral to the story. Extramarital female sexuality leads to misery and ruin is the message here: 'I would fall over the brink of the precipice upon which I stood into an abyss of ruin' (*CJ1*: 402). Physical passion is very much present in the entry, but to protect the reputation of the journal's author it is pictured as dangerous, especially for the woman. A common tradition in art and literature of the nineteenth century, 'the fallen woman' trope suits the narrator's needs perfectly: 'We nestled there [in the parlour] together in the gloom and silence. Dangerous? That is too weak a word! I knew that I was tiptoeing on the brink of utter destruction' (*CJ1*: 399).[96]

96 For more discussion on the fallen woman in nineteenth-century literature, see Watt (1984). Ruth Goodman (2013: 425) mentions that '[p]eriod literature was rife with stories about "fallen women". The religious press carried more column inches than their more secular counterparts, including morality tales about the perils of succumbing to temptation, which constituted a major thematic thread in magazines such as *The Quiver*'.

Trying to explain the narrated I's behaviour, and to gain sympathy from her readers, the narrator ponders, after Herman has requested her to 'stay down a little while with me': 'I should have refused – oh, of course I should! We should always do exactly what is right at all times! But unfortunately some of us don't seem able to. The temptation was too strong – I went helplessly down before it and murmured a faint assent' (*CJ1*: 399). Echoing an all too common motif in nineteenth-century literature, Montgomery creates her own version of the storyline featured for instance in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth* (1853) and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of D'Urbervilles* (1891).[97] As Nina Auerbach's study *Woman and the Demon* (1982: 151) maintains, 'the fallen woman … flourished in the popular iconography of America and the Continent as well as England. Her stance as galvanic outcast, her piquant blend of innocence and experience, came to embody everything in womanhood that was dangerously, tragically, and triumphantly beyond social boundaries'.

However, for Montgomery it is essential to emphasise that the narrated I comes very close to succumbing to temptation, but does not become a fallen woman. According to Rothman (1984: 54), it was important for women, 'who were now defined by their role as the morally superior sex', to exert self-control both as a domestic and social power. Instead of being a sign of women's natural weakness and sinfulness, premarital pregnancy was now by the end of the nineteenth century a statement that 'a woman lacked the purity with which she was believed to be endowed "by nature"' (Rothman 1984: 54). George Watt (1984: 2) also points out that in the eyes of Victorian society, there was no difference between a prostitute and a girl who made one mistake. For the future minister's wife, it was paramount to demonstrate to her readers that ultimately she did possess both self-control and the inherent purity of her sex.

Therefore, although the narrated I is overcome by passion she cannot control, the narrator keeps the threads firmly in her hands. Instantly after the description of her 'unreasoning love' of Herman, the narrator begins explaining the affair logically. Her explanation culminates in the claim that Herman is unfit to be her husband and that their marriage could never work (*CJ1*: 397). Despite this obvious drawback, the narrated I is presented as helpless in the spell of Herman's power and she continues the relationship. She is depicted as a spoiled heroine who has 'moods' and sits sulking on the sofa when Herman does not notice her. But it is not until the key scene of the story, in which Herman and the narrated I are in her bedroom

97 According to Watt (1984: 4), one of the most popular books on this topic was Ellen Wood's *East Lynne* (1861), which treats the subject matter of fallen women with sensational contempt.

and Herman supposedly suggests intercourse, that she almost becomes the fallen woman.

This scene of 'almost falling' is very artfully depicted through gaps and hints. The couple is cuddling on the bed, 'the candle [is burning] low' and things almost go too far. The narrated I knows that she is 'running a fearful risk', but since 'it was heaven to be there in his [Herman's] arms', she succumbs to the 'old fatal, paralysing spell' (*CJ1*: 403). Herman is depicted requesting something from the narrated I. The readers are not told what he actually asks for, but within the context of the love-making scene it is easy to fill in the blanks, to which the narrator also refers: '[A] request whose veiled meaning it was impossible to misunderstand!' (*CJ1*: 404). The narrated I is dangerously close to becoming a fallen woman and her reaction is depicted accordingly: 'I cowered down among my cushions in an agony of shame. Oh, what had I done? What had he said? Was it possible that things had come to such a pass with *me* that only a faintly uttered, hysterical 'no' had stood between me and dishonor?' (*CJ1*: 404; emphasis original) Important markers here are the narrated I's shamefulness and the borderline between dishonour – sexual intercourse – and respectability – being able to say no.[98]

Several similar scenes are immediately repeated in the April 8, 1898 entry. Interestingly enough, the narrator feels the need to remind the readers at this point that 'I am not defending myself at all – I am only just telling what happened' (*CJ1*: 405), in order to make it seem that the sentimental and romantic tale being told is purely based on realistic depiction and facts. As the language becomes more heated, however, to match the rising tension between the lovers, the narrator becomes more elaborate and fantastical in her portrayal of the events. Herman always leaves the narrated I's room 'when twelve o'clock struck' (*CJ1*: 405), as Cinderella has to leave the ball in the fairy tale. Herman's breath and kisses are 'burning' and the narrated I 'feel[s] those kisses now, burning on wrists and fingers' and 'can feel his arms tighten around me, the warm pressure of his dear curly head on my breast' (*CJ1*: 405-406). In this sequence of scenes, the narrated I's inner fight between passion and rationality is depicted.

The narrated I almost yields twice and at both times her desires are brought vividly to life as 'the most horrible temptation swept over [her]' (*CJ1*: 404). However, she does not yield and the narrator offers a highly rational explanation for the outcome of this struggle. According to her, it is not tradition, training nor

98 Something of Montgomery's reluctance to overtly depict sex in her journals and novels can be partly explained by this comment by Watt (1984: 180): 'Any obvious sexual reference [in nineteenth-century literature] was bad enough, but sex outside of marriage was the ultimate literary sin'.

consideration of right and wrong that keeps her from transgressing the line (*CJ1*: 406). It is not even 'fear of the price the woman pays' (*CJ1*: 406), which is the only overt reference to 'the fallen woman' theme. Ultimately, the reason that is given is that the fear of Herman Leard's contempt saves the narrated I from disgrace: 'If it had not been for that I realize that I would have plunged recklessly into that abyss of passion, even if my whole after life were to be one of agonized repentance' (*CJ1*: 406).

Although subverting some of the social norms of the time, the narrator still adheres to the ideal of the romance tradition, in which the woman acts in order to please the man and fears his judgement and abandonment. Inconsistently, the narrator also claims that the narrated I does have the ultimate power over the situation, by stating that 'love was a strong passion with me – but pride – and perhaps rationality – was equally strong. I could not stoop to marry a man so much my inferior in all the essentials necessary, not to a few hectic months, but to a long lifetime together' (*CJ1*: 407), thus continuing the discourse of Herman being an unsuitable match for marriage.

There is a strange tension in the text between succumbing to the conventional way of portraying passion and aiming for a more modern depiction. To modern readers at least, something is at odds in the narrator's explanation of the supposedly real reason for not having sexual intercourse with Herman, especially when it is contrasted with the portrayal of Herman as her inferior. Montgomery seems to be at the borderline of writing a daring and realistic depiction of a female character's sexual experiences, which should be allowed to be expressed even with a man she claims not to regard as her future husband. Apparently, she does not dare to write it and hides this depiction under a more acceptable and safe version laden with Victorian conventions.

Gammel (2005a: 136) observes that Montgomery's sexuality operates within the classical Victorian gender codes: 'He takes the initiative, she reacts; he desires, she yields'. This is correct and also follows closely 'the fallen woman' tradition. Gammel (2005a: 136) also notes that Montgomery is daring and modern in depicting female arousal within a context where she has no intention to marry her partner. Finally, she asserts that Montgomery is 'in fact quite shameless in claiming her sexual desire in her journal' (Gammel 2005a: 136).[99] While I agree, I would draw a distinction on the level of equating the textual I in the journals with Montgomery the historical person,

99 Gammel (2005a: 131) suggests in reference to the joint diary written by Montgomery and her friend Nora Lefurgey that Montgomery 'covered her discomfort with sexuality by excessively masquerading the flirtatious role'.

as well as on the level of the narrating and narrated Is. The narrator is indeed daring in her portrayal of female sexuality, albeit using literary conventions and fictional models to understate the message. However, the characterisation of the narrated I is fairly traditional with her feminine reactions to Herman's advances. In sum, one can say that the language employed is sensual and erotic, the actual events are daring and laden with physical passion, but the heroine of the story is portrayed as a typical Victorian heroine, who fights against falling into the abyss. Gammel (2005a: 141) aptly points out that Montgomery masked the conflict between her career and marriage 'by using the hyperbolic language of passion and the dramatic story of the two suitors as a rhetoric tool'.

The affair ends as the lovers have one final scene, in which the narrated I once again declines Herman's temptations and is portrayed as the tragic heroine, mixing the qualities of Hamlet and Ophelia, much as in the previous entries: 'I left him standing there in the moonlight and went up to my room – alone – *alone* – as I must henceforth be!' (*CJ1*: 409; emphasis original). Familiar qualities are attributed to her such as sleeplessness and 'mental misery', she is 'thin and pale', and she misses Herman 'heartbreakingly' (*CJ1*: 407, 409). Nevertheless, the narrator portrays the narrated I as an enduring character, who heroically fights her longing for the lover: 'I *will* conquer – I *will* live it down even if my heart is forever crushed in the struggle' (*CJ1*: 409; emphases original). The story of the two suitors has a dramatically fitting ending in which the narrated I breaks off the engagement with Edwin Simpson, Herman Leard dies of pneumonia and the narrated I finally marries a third man, Ewan Macdonald.

Culminating the story, the narrating I describes in the entry of July 24, 1899 reading about Herman Leard's death in the paper, which is 'the "finish" to the most tragic chapter of my life. It is ended forever and *the page is turned*' (*CJ1*: 440; emphasis added). As the literary metaphors suggest, Herman's death is a proper conclusion to the highly literary story of the two suitors. Furthermore, now Herman is hers 'as he never could be in life' and 'no other woman could ever lie on his heart or kiss his lips' (*CJ1*: 441). Yet another dramatic and chillingly gothic scene is depicted, in which the narrated I kneels by her window,[100] re-lives the events of the affair and dreams of being in the coffin with Herman 'with all pain and loneliness lost forever in an unending, dreamless sleep, clasped to his heart in one last eternal embrace' (*CJ1*: 442), thus returning to the imagery and style of the previous entries. Edwin

100 As the editors of the *Complete Journals* note, this scene is repeated in *Anne of the Island* (1915) (*CJ1*: 441). See also chapter 5, in which a similar scene is discussed in reference to the death of Montgomery's cousin Frederica Campbell.

Simpson does not disappear as smoothly to the realms of death but returns to haunt the narrated I several times by coming to preach in Cavendish where Montgomery lived with her grandmother.[101]

3.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a kind of postscript to the two suitors narrative in Montgomery's journals let me conclude this chapter by drawing attention to the different existing versions of the two suitors affair. Examining the various versions is important in order to highlight the constructed quality of Montgomery's autobiographical writing. Montgomery develops and alters the story according to her changing audience, whether it is herself, her sons or her pen-friends. Furthermore, the vast amount of diverse versions supports my reading of the two suitors affair as one of the main narratives of conventional romance in the journals.

Firstly, there exist the original handwritten journals on which my reading is based and where Montgomery offers the longest and most detailed description of the events. The first volume of *The Complete Journals* includes all of this material. In addition to the version in the journal there is a thoroughly abridged account of the affair in the typescript of the journals that Montgomery prepared for her sons. In the typescript much of the material from the handwritten journal entries has been left out and Herman's name is never mentioned – he is simply called X (TS: 21). Unlike the original entries in the handwritten journal, the typewritten entries about the two suitors affair are an overtly manipulated version, in which Montgomery comments on the text, mentions that omissions have been made and even places the word 'omission' in brackets. She states for example: 'What follows is a condensed account of what happened that spring. The entry in my original diary cannot be written here. I shall present the bare bones of it. I made a terrible mistake and paid the penalty of my folly in intense suffering' (TS: 3a). It is understandable that certain details have been censored in this version, since its audience are Montgomery's sons. However, much other material in the typescript has been left intact, which suggests that Montgomery saw the entries depicting the two suitors affair as something that was not only volatile, but needed editing.

Secondly, in this version of the affair – written with a retrospective glance in the 1930s when Montgomery started preparing the typewritten version of the journals[102]

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101 See for example the October 8, 1900 (*CJ1*: 464–465) and the December 27, 1903 (*CJ2*: 89–90) entries. Edwin Simpson and Herman Leard are also discussed in the later journal entries (see *SJ2*: 367; UJ5: 47–48; UJ7: 40; *SJ4*:19; *SJ4*: 229).

102 See for instance the entry of August 2, 1931: 'About a year ago it seemed to me that, as I could leave this journal to only one boy, I should make a typewritten copy of it for the other. So every Sunday I type a few pages' (*SJ4*: 145).

– Herman's lack of intellect is further underlined and the narrator plainly states that 'I could not marry such a man' (TS: 21). The myth of the simple farmer-lover grows, showing the narrated I as the one with power in the relationship, especially when the typescript version omits all references to physical passion between Herman and the narrated I.

Thirdly, there is another version of the events, an even more public account found in a letter Montgomery wrote to her long-time pen-friend George Boyd MacMillan. This version was written in 1907, earlier than the typescript version, and after Herman's death, but before Montgomery's marriage. It is revealing because the audience is different. A pen-friend is less intimate than Montgomery's own children, as in the typescript, but by contrast more immediate, for a letter is read as soon as it arrives. In the epistolary version the narrator does not mention any names, but interestingly enough offers an even clearer variant of the two suitors theme. The two men are juxtaposed by the narrator marking them A (Herman) and B (Ed), without mentioning their names. By describing their qualities, she answers a question posed by MacMillan in a previous letter: 'Do you think that love depends upon an admiration for qualities possessed by the loved one? Or is it something more subtle than this?' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 28).

In this version, maybe for the sake of argument, Herman's bad qualities are described with striking hyperbole. The narrator states that 'I did not *admire him in the least*. … I would not have *married* him for anything' and that 'he had no brains, no particular good looks, in short, nothing that I admire in a man' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 28–29; emphases original). Montgomery even repeats this view in a journal entry of August 2, 1931, in which she mentions having begun the typescript copy: 'I have often vainly wondered what was the secret of the irresistible fascination Herman Leard had for me. He was only moderately good-looking, he was insignificant, he had absolutely no brains or culture' (*SJ4*: 145). Hence, one can notice how a myth begun in the journals continues and grows in other contexts and how the assumed audience affects the versions of the two suitors affair.

To sum up, literary modes have a central role in Montgomery's use of the two suitors convention. The fairy tale, the gothic novel and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* all have their part in the tale of Herman, Ed and Maud Montgomery. The use of this particular convention also continues throughout Montgomery's journals, even in the depiction of female intimacy, which proves how central it is to the depiction of romance. Furthermore, nothing highlights a diary's fictional nature better than knowing that some important historical details have been left out.

In her biography of Montgomery, Mary Rubio (2008: 100–103) adds yet another level to the story of the two suitors by demonstrating that historically the affair was not really a triangle drama between Ed, Herman and Montgomery.[103] Instead, the affair apparently consisted of a double triangle with Herman Leard being engaged to a woman called Ettie Schurman as he was secretly courting Montgomery. Some details in Montgomery's account of the events might be better understood read in the light of this revelation,[104] but what is more telling is the fact that Montgomery does not mention any of this in her journals. According to Rubio (2008: 101), she must have known of Herman's engagement to Ettie and was understandably jealous. Whatever the motives behind the real-life Montgomery writing in her journal, it is clear that for literary reasons there was no room for the other woman in the passionate love story with two suitors and a suffering heroine at its centre.

103 Gammel (2005a: 142–152) has also discussed this aspect.

104 See the quotation mentioned above where the narrator states: 'No other woman could ever lie on [Herman's] heart or kiss his lips' (*CJ1*: 441). This is one of the few overt references to another woman and might indicate Ettie Schurman. The narrator also discusses the narrated I's puzzlement about Herman's behaviour: 'I supposed he was merely flirting for pastime. … Yet there were many things about his attitude I never could understand' (*CJ1*: 398).

CHAPTER 4

MOCK ROMANCE IN THE SECRET 'DIARY' OF NORA AND MAUD

Moving on from an intensely romantic and passionate account of the two suitors affair to a celebration of female friendship and co-authorship, I will now examine the diary that Montgomery kept with her close friend Nora Lefurgey in 1903. Montgomery's secret co-authored diary offers a surprisingly different portrayal of romance compared to her personal journals, one that is full of satire, scorn and ridicule. It also manifests a new narrative voice, which sometimes resembles the unromantic schoolgirl in Montgomery's teenage journal entries, but in a tone notably altered. In this diary, hyperbole and humour give voice to anger and social criticism that rarely appear in the personal journals. Furthermore, the slapstick comedy and carefree language of the diary define romantic encounters between men and women anew, thus highlighting the gap between this not so public record and Montgomery's own personal journals.

In Montgomery's journals the effect of the assumed audience is of vital importance, but it is even more significant in the diary written by Nora and Maud.[105] This secret diary is a peculiar document. It was written between January 19 and June 25, 1903, and is thus linked to a certain period of time, namely that which Nora spent boarding with Montgomery and her grandmother while teaching in the nearby Cavendish school. Nora Lefurgey also came from Prince Edward Island, and she was six years younger than Montgomery. On September 21, 1902, Montgomery writes in her journal: 'I have made a new friend recently. … The person in question is Nora Lefurgey, who is the school teacher here.... We "took" to each other from the start and have been enjoying our congeniality ever since' (*CJ2*: 60). Sharing her friend's love for writing and literature as well as her experiences as a teacher in country schools, Nora had plenty in common with Montgomery, which made the two women perfect partners in diary writing.

If regarded as an actual diary, the secret diary clearly falls under the category of a 'diary of situation', to employ Kagle and Gramegna's term (1996: 55). That

105 Throughout this chapter, when mentioning the diary, I refer to Montgomery as Maud in order to emphasise the more intimate character created in this diary compared to the authorial persona of the journals. In the diary, the fictionally created character is actually called 'Maude'.

is, it is 'created in response to a tension or dislocation in the diarist's life such as travel, war, courtship, illness or other personal crises' (Kagle and Gramegna 1996: 55). Although the appearance of Nora in Montgomery's life could hardly be called 'tension' or 'dislocation', the two women definitely embark on a shared journey of journalising when they begin keeping their joint diary. Jennifer H. Litster (2005: 99) notes that '[l]ike an account of a journey or a vacation, the collaborative diary has a finite span from its inception and therefore a predetermined plot'. Just as the predetermined plot, the theme of the diary – writing mockingly about flirtations, men and romance – is chosen intentionally by the two authors.

What is more, the diary's status among the plethora of existing Montgomery documents is unique. Unlike the personal journals, Montgomery did not include this diary in the legal-sized ledgers. The original notebooks containing the secret diary are either missing or more likely destroyed by Montgomery, but their contents survive in the typescript Montgomery prepared for her sons. Even in the typewritten version, however, the entries copied from the secret diary are crossed over, indicating that Montgomery was possibly not going to include them in the final version of the typescript.[106]

Nevertheless, Jennifer H. Litster (2005: 89) and Irene Gammel (2005c: 20) have noted that it is probable that Montgomery copied the diary in its entirety, since longer gaps are usually explained and, for instance, the misspelling of Montgomery's first name, Maud, as 'Maude', with its humorous indications, is left intact. Furthermore, if the diary is analysed as a piece of fictional writing, it is not surprising that Montgomery preserved the spelling of her name as 'Maude', since it denotes the fictional character created in the diary. An annotated version of the secret diary was published in 2005 in the collection of essays *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery*, edited and annotated by Gammel. The diary was first introduced to a wider audience of scholars by Litster at the International L.M. Montgomery and Life Writing Symposium in 2002 (Gammel 2005b: 9), and I make use of her essay on the secret diary in my analysis.

In other words, this chapter can be read as a transition from Montgomery's discussion of her male romances to the next chapters' examination of female intimacy, that is, close friendships and even love relations between women. As the secret diary is quite an unorthodox document among Montgomery's texts, it allows me to explore Montgomery's romance discourse in a broader perspective. Merely taking into account the conventional romance plots in Montgomery's journals

106 It could also be that Montgomery did not want the secret diary to be published with the rest of the journals.

would keep some of the most important aspects of them unexamined. The secret diary not only mocks the conventional romance discourse, but it also presents an intimate setting of female interaction and closeness.

In addition to analysing the diary itself, I also briefly discuss Montgomery's scrapbooks as examples of the visual communications Maud and Nora excelled at. What is more, perhaps surprisingly, the secret diary enables an analysis of Montgomery's representation of her husband Ewan Macdonald, who has so far remained in the shadows. In fact, the diary is quite likely the only document in which references to Ewan are spontaneous and untouched by the older Montgomery editing her life story. Hence, the secret diary brings together seemingly unrelated topics into a miscellaneous whole, quite fittingly with the diary's burlesque style and nature.

4.1 AUDIENCE AND SUBVERSIVE STRATEGIES IN THE FICTIONAL MOCK-DIARY

Compared to Montgomery's personal journals, reading and analysing the secret diary proves a challenging task at times. As the diary of Nora and Maud consists almost entirely of private jokes and puns, reading it feels like eavesdropping on a private conversation. Additionally frustrating is the fact that a considerable amount of background information is needed in order to grasp even the simplest of details in the diary, such as names of people and places as well as early twentieth-century activities and customs. Fortunately most of these are explained in the published version of the diary (see Gammel 2005c: 19–87).[107] Despite its exceedingly private nature, the diary was nevertheless also in part written for an (imagined) external audience. Furthermore, when typing and copying the diary, Montgomery was aware of posthumous readers, since she decided to include it in the typescript of her journal. In this sense, the diary calls for a very distinct reading strategy compared to the personal journals. Instead of striving to explain and understand everything, the secret diary must be read with the recognition that it is not possible to comprehend all of it. One should instead try to gain new information on Montgomery's romantic discourse by reading between the lines of the two women's banter and treat the secret diary as fictional.

107 Throughout this chapter, I quote from the original typescript. As when quoting from Montgomery's handwritten journals, I denote emphasis with underlining like in the original source rather than with italics. For clarity's sake, when omitting part of the text from this diary, I place the triple-dot in brackets. Both Nora and Maud make use of points of ellipsis so frequently in the diary that it makes sense to mark my omission from theirs, which has a stylistic significance.

The secret diary is a co-authored project in the sense that the two writers – Nora and Maud – jointly create something that resembles an authentic diary by taking turns writing an entry, or rather, a chapter. Often there are two entries of the same day from both writers, but mostly each covers a day. Hence, more than anything else the diary is a collective endeavour, a mock-diary of dialogue, private jokes and romance. The writers of the diary, the narrators called 'Nora and Maud' (the narrating Is) enter into a writing battle where they taunt each other to more and more daring jokes and mischief, and by depicting their escapades, create fictional characters of themselves called 'Nora and Maude' (the narrated Is). Furthermore, the audience of this secret diary is more tangibly present than in Montgomery's personal journals, because Nora is both the other author and the other reader – and indeed, the other character. As mentioned by Litster (2005: 99), the fact that both women were writers cannot be overlooked, and it is evident that they depended on each other's writing for inspiration.[108] Thus, in the secret diary the writing skills of L.M. Montgomery and Nora Lefurgey are displayed.

The use of code names and puns suggest a shared intimacy between the two authors, but makes it hard for an external reader to understand the text. For instance, the narrators keep referring to 'birdology' and call the various beaux by names of birds, such as 'the three jays', 'Rob-in', and 'Hen-ry' (see TS: 131–132). Litster (2005: 94) points out that secrecy was understandable knowing the conservative Presbyterian community's attitude to frivolity. In the diary there is a scene where Nora is described as collecting the pages of the diary after having been startled by an unexpected visitor, which indicates that the diary was to be kept a secret: 'I went to interview Nora who was running about gathering up the sheets of this self-same volume which she had scattered in her flight' (TS: 123). The scarceness of references to the collaborative diary in Montgomery's personal journal proves that the diary remained secret in other respects too (Litster 2005: 94). There are only a few direct references to the diary in the personal journal: according to Litster (2005: 94), in the entries dated April 12 1903, June 30, 1903 and February 24, 1929.

Despite its secrecy, the diary is nevertheless a more public document compared to Montgomery's personal journals in terms of audience. As Culley (1985: 11–12) has noted, the sense of audience has a crucial influence over what is said and how it is put. In the secret diary the audience – most importantly Nora – is more immediate and more co-operative than in Montgomery's journals. Unlike the journals, in the secret diary the future reading audience is less important and less present, since the

108 Nora Lefurgey also kept a private journal and wrote an unpublished novel (see Litster 2005: 99).

diary was not intended to be published or even seen by others, at least not at the time of its inception. The change in audience and objective explains the difference in style between the personal journals and the secret diary.

This difference is evident in the April 12, 1903 entry of the personal journal, in which Montgomery refers to the diary for the first time. The narrator of the journals highlights the gap between the narrative voices of the co-written diary and the personal journal: '[O]ne more ridiculous thing is that *I* should have helped to write them [the pages of the diary]' (*CJ2*: 69–70; emphasis original). The rest of the April 12, 1903 entry is indeed a far cry from the lively style of the secret diary, written at the same time. Most strikingly, the narrator complains at the beginning of the entry that she has been 'dull and depressed – sick of life and of myself' (*CJ2*: 67) and that she is 'tired of existence' (*CJ2*: 69).

In contrast, in this same entry the narrating I notes:

> When Nora came here we started for sport's sake a sort of co-operative diary, she writing it one day and I the next. It was to be of the burlesque order, giving humorous sketches of all our larks, jokes etc. and illustrated with cartoons of our own drawing. In short we set out to make it just as laughable as possible. I think we have succeeded. Nothing could be more ridiculous than its pages. (*CJ2*: 69)

Turning her attention to a more joyous mode of writing, Montgomery (or the narrator of the journals) depicts the aims of the 'sort of diary' by highlighting its nature as 'humorous' and 'laughable', full of 'sketches' of her and Nora's jokes. It is noteworthy that Montgomery chooses to employ the word 'sketch' when describing the contents of the diary. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*s.v.* 'sketch', *n.*), the word can refer to '[a] brief account, description, or narrative giving the main or important facts, incidents, etc., and not going into the details', but also to '[a] short play or performance of slight dramatic construction and usually of a light or comic nature … also, a musical performance by one person, in which playing, singing, and talking are combined'. Considering the superficial style of the diary entries and the musical pieces in it, the diary's form is carefully chosen by the two authors.

Rather than writing about what happens to occur in their lives, the writer-characters Nora and Maud carefully pick incidents and events that fit the diary's theme and even create fictional scenes as material for their sketches. A good example and proof of this method is found in Montgomery's scrapbooks from

this period.[109] As can be noted in the facsimile edition of Montgomery's 'Island Scrapbooks' (published in Epperly 2008), the so-called 'Red Scrapbook' contains several items referring to the secret diary (see also Epperly 2008: 96, 108, 122). In fact, a careful scrutiny suggests that the mementoes often work as spadework for the diary chapters, almost as notes scribbled down by the two women in various situations – such as a Literary Society meeting (see Epperly 2008: 97) – which are later reworked into proper entries in the diary. The scrapbook 'looting' is mentioned several times in the diary by the two writers, so it makes sense that the two projects, one visual and one literary, went hand in hand. For instance, Maud writes in the entry of January 20, 1903 that she 'tried to yank some fur out of his [Russell's] coat for our scrapbooks' (TS: 115), while Nora remarks in the entry of February 17, 1903 that 'Maude and I tried to "swipe" as much stuff as we could but alas, we lost it all!!' (TS: 125).[110]

Hardly anything is taken seriously in the diary and both writers employ a carnivalesque style mocking the surrounding society, especially their suitors and each other. As the definition of *burlesque* suggests, this kind of writing style is used to subvert social norms and power structures and, according to its dictionary meaning, to make a parody or satire of them.[111] Unfortunately, only the text survives, since the cartoons Montgomery mentions are lost with the original notebooks. However, the entry of June 30, 1903 in Montgomery's personal journals tells us something of the visual appearance of the actual diary.

At first, the narrator informs her readers that Nora has left Cavendish: 'Nora went away a few days ago. She has given up the school. I miss her terribly' (*CJ2*: 74). She then goes on to record the last moments of the joint diary endeavour: 'The night before she [Nora] went away we came up to my den and wrote the last chapters in those two absurd "diaries" of ours. We have bound them in covers of fancy paper, with adornments of gold paint and ribbon, and have illustrated them with "home-made" pen-and-ink sketches which are so ridiculous that I howl every time I glance

109 Goodman (2013: 359) notes that scrapbooks began to flourish with the colour-printing revolution from 1860s onwards. 'Children, and especially girls, had long been encouraged to keep newspaper and magazine cuttings, as well as odd assortments of items to be used to decorate objects, or to be put in books to be looked at as mementoes' (Goodman 2013: 359).

110 Mary Beth Cavert (November 3, 2014, email to the author) also draws attention to the public project of Nora and Maud, 'as they silently, or not, filed away details to mock in the diary'.

111 'Etymology: French *burlesque*, Italian *burlesco*, *burla* ridicule, mockery. … Of the nature of derisive imitation; ironically bombastic, mock-heroic or mock-pathetic' (*OED*: *s.v.* 'burlesque' *adj.* and *n.*).

over them' (*CJ2*: 74).[112] The fact that the narrator of the personal journal refers to 'the diaries' in quotation marks and notes that they wrote their last 'chapters' instead of 'entries', further demonstrates that the secret diary was more of a literary experiment than a confessional diary written in earnest.[113] Instead of a private diary of two women, the secret diary could actually be defined as a diary novel.[114]

Reading and analysing the secret diary as a fictional work, based on real-life characters and events, helps in interpreting it. Even if the readers do not understand all of the private jokes and references in the diary, they can still appreciate the narrative drama created on its pages. The fact alone that thirteen times in total (out of thirty-one days covered) the two women write about the same day from two different perspectives makes these entries indeed seem like chapters of a novel rather than actual diary entries.[115] As an example of this, consider for instance the 'entry' dated February 10, 1903, in which Maud purports to give '<u>my</u> version of Sunday' (TS: 123; emphasis original), in a response to Nora's previous entry dated 'Sunday, Feb 8th'. Thus, even the entries that do not bear the same date might cover the same events from a different perspective.

Although the entries are almost throughout the diary responses to the previous entry, and as such offer a lively dialogue between the two women, the diary as a whole consists of fictionalised scenes of the main events, depicted and narrated in a style chosen by the authors. Of course, even what the main events are and what goes into the diary is intentionally chosen by the writers. More precisely, these are events concerning parties, drives with men and funny incidents that are easy to fictionalise in the diary's 'entries' and that fit the topic of the diary novel: mock romance and flirtation. Hence, even this seemingly more intimate diary should be read bearing in mind the same questions as when analysing Montgomery's personal journals. The writers 'Maud and Nora' should not, then, be equated with the characters called

112 The drawn illustrations accompanying the text are reminiscent of the epistolary novels by Jean Webster, such as *Daddy Long Legs* (1912) and *Dear Enemy* (1915), in which the author's illustrations humorously supplement the letters. Naturally, however, Webster's books were not available during the writing of the secret diary in 1903.

113 Litster (2005: 89) also draws attention to the diary's generic status by stating that 'the diary is a lampoon of actual events, which Montgomery conceded by using inverted commas … whenever she referred to the two notebooks in which it was written'.

114 See Lorna Martens' (1985) study on this particular genre. Martens (1985: 25) notes, for instance, that '[t]he earliest diary fiction [of the eighteenth century] imitated real diaries, and for a long and formative period in its history, the diary novel continued to be subject to the influence of the real diary'.

115 The diary has forty-five entries in total, so entries that cover the same day or same events provide almost half of the material. The dates that are covered by both writers are: January 19, January 22, January 26, February 6, February 18, March 29, April 19, April 28, May 6, May 17, June 7, June 21 and June 25, 1903. However, since some of the entries are misdated, the figures might vary slightly.

'Maude and Nora' they create. Furthermore, with such clearly-stated intention, the fictional aspects of the diary become prominent.[116]

Unlike Montgomery's personal journals, the secret diary does not seem to have a specific literary precedent, although Litster (2005: 99) points out that there are some superficial similarities with Kate Douglas Wiggin's mock travel book *Penelope's Experiences in Scotland* (1898).[117] Despite the fact that the diary does not have a clear literary model, it is easy to notice resemblance between the diary and popular young adult fiction of the time, or even earlier epistolary tradition.[118] Even if not consisting of letters as such, the diary and its entries are like letters in many respects, with the fellow writer as the primary addressee, who will read the entry after it has been composed. Even when the other diary writer and the addressee is not present at the writing moment – both Nora and Maud visit and are absent several times during the composing of the diary –, the author of the entry still writes for the other, well knowing that the entry will eventually be read by her. As noted above, the two authors react to each other's entries and comment on them in subsequent ones. Maud snorts at Nora's earlier account by saying that 'I don't think her entry shows her to have been very grateful' (TS: 126) or makes a note on how their writing styles affect each other: 'Well (I've caught that word from Nora)' (TS: 127).

Despite the epistolary qualities in the diary, there is a further complication in terms of the question of audience. That is to say, the audience does not consist merely of Nora and Maud, but also of a textual 'third eye' that both are writing to in addition to each other. This omnipresent narratee is needed in order for the sarcasm to work. If the two diarists wrote directly to each other – as in, 'Dear Maud/Nora' – the humour would be more direct because they could react to ridiculous events and stories immediately. However, in the diary the 'unnamed external audience' (Litster 2005: 100) is like a villager or the implied reader to whom the roles of the diarists can be played out with mock seriousness, which then results in the parodying effect. Litster (2005: 101) draws attention to the dramatic aspect of the diary calling it 'life-writing that dramatizes rather than narrates events'.

It is noteworthy that Nora and Maud never address each other directly as in

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116 See the April 12, 1903 entry of Montgomery's personal journals quoted above.

117 As mentioned in chapter 2, Montgomery's childhood diary was inspired by Metta Victor's *A Bad Boy's Diry* (1880).

118 Martens (1985: 25) notes that the diary novel in general was influenced by the epistolary novel.

'*you* are away' but always in the third person.[119] Hence, Maud writes that 'peace and quietness reign in the household of Macneill tonight for *Nora* is away' (TS: 118; emphasis added). This fact that might seem insignificant actually shows how the diary convention is by no means accidentally or unconsciously used for a humorous effect by the two writers. Furthermore, the fictional nature of the narrator-characters created in the secret diary is emphasised by not addressing the other writer directly. As both Nora and Maud were semi-professional journal writers and Montgomery also a professional fiction writer, it is safe to assume that they were more than familiar with the conventions that came with the medium.

Hence, even though ultimately writing to each other, Nora and Maud employ the 'dear diary' convention by addressing a third narratee, as in this example: '[N]ever mind, I'll fix Miss Maude. I hereby swear that I will <u>tell</u> yes, sister, tell, every male creature that comes to this house that she lost her garter!!! I will! <u>I</u> stole her garter, indeed!' (TS: 118; emphases original). Interestingly enough, the narrator (Nora) addresses both Maud and the assumed narratee. One could insert 'dear diary' (or even 'dear reader') after 'never mind' and equate 'sister' with Maud. On the other hand, 'sister' seems rather to refer to the omnipresent addressee, exemplifying the fascinating sisterly ambiance in the diary.[120] Culley's (1985: 11) point that '"[d]ear diary" is a direct address to an ideal audience: always available, always listening, always sympathetic' proves valid in the secret diary, since the sympathetic diary narratee seems constantly to be on the side of the author of an entry, a technique that both Nora and Maud repeatedly employ to humorous effect.

Despite the sisterly ambiance, or rather, because of it, the chapter-entries in the diary play with and ridicule the stereotypical feminine roles of the time and the code of conduct that defines them. Just as the burlesque, this is a subversive strategy that is not employed only because it gives pleasure, but also in order to empower the writer. As Canadian women's voices in 1903 were still largely domestic without much power to change the rules of society or their own status, women used private texts to gain some standing by commenting on the society they lived in.[121] Mary

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119 However, when female intimacy is depicted in the secret diary, both women employ the first person plural, 'we'.

120 After all, most girls' and women's diaries using the 'dear diary' convention are either named after a female or addressed to one. Probably the most famous example of this is Anne Frank's diary that is addressed to Kitty (see e.g. Lejeune 2009: 247).

121 Legally, women were not considered 'persons' in Canada until 1929. Women were granted the right to vote in federal elections in 1922 and those who owned property in towns had the right to vote in municipal elections between 1888 and 1892 – rural women did not have this right until 1913 (see McDonald-Rissanen 2001: 11–12).

McDonald-Rissanen (2008: 58) writes in her dissertation on Prince Edward Island women's life-writing that in local newspapers and later histories, women have been treated as 'written subjects' rather than 'writing subjects' and their role as members of society has been ignored.

Furthermore, Nussbaum (1988: 136) claims that since diaries and journals are usually not published, they have the potential to subvert the public scrutiny of a more public text. What is more, '[t]he marginalized and unauthorized discourse in diary holds the power to disrupt authorized versions of experience' (Nussbaum 1988: 136). Especially when dealing with women's diary writing, this aspect cannot be overlooked. It comes through in Nora's and Maud's dealing with their surrounding society and explains in part why they chose the diary mode for their fictional mock romance. McDonald-Rissanen (2001: 43) notes that the diary offered women a literary convention where they could reach out of their silence and play with the male-dominated discourse in creative ways. During Maud's and Nora's time, the authorised version of experience was to a great extent in the hands of men, and the secret diary offered a much-needed space for dismantling this authority.

Maud and Nora lived in a small Presbyterian countryside community where everybody's – men's as well as women's – behaviour was strictly regulated by unspoken rules and even more strictly observed by the people of the community. Bunkers (1988: 194) has noted that the technique that most female diarists employ is self-editing and self-censoring. This technique of encoding – 'the transmission of the writer's message in an oblique rather than in a direct manner' (Bunkers 1988: 194) – is used, according to Bunkers, in order for the writer to maintain a perceived sense of self in the text. She maintains that although this kind of encoding is by no means unique to women's writing it is more common in texts of writers who have had to suppress their ideas or who have been denied the right to speak (Bunkers 1988: 194). Self-editing and censoring is very much present in Montgomery's personal journal and analysing it in terms of Bunkers' view has proven fruitful (see e.g. McDonald-Rissanen 2005). Also, as most older private diaries from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century are full of gaps and silences, decoding is needed.

However, analysing the secret diary one cannot help noticing that a slightly different strategy of encoding is at play. For Bunkers (1988: 194–195), encoding is a way of 'breaking silences' and finding ways to speak directly or indirectly about what has remained unspoken. In their diary novel the strategy that Maud and Nora adopt is to hold on to the silences, but not by self-censoring or editing. Instead they highlight the unspoken in society, not only by speaking about it, but by ridiculing and bringing it to the fore. As they write, Nora and Maud employ all the proper

Victorian language codes, but manage to draw so much attention to the language used that it becomes ludicrous. For instance, Maud mentions 'the garments not mentionable in polite society' when discussing a lost garter (January 22 and 26, 1903, TS: 116), while Nora refers to the same garter as 'that dreadful article of female attire' (January 26, 1903, TS: 118). By repeating the sentence the readers' attention is drawn to it to the extent that the parodying effect is evident.

Nora and Maud also jokingly compete in this language game. In the entry dated March 21, 1903[122] Maud writes about 'Literary', a social meeting where papers were read and discussed,[123] and comments on a man's outlook: 'Father Pierce presided and I think he must have been praying in a very muddy spot, judging from the knees of the garments that clothed his nether limbs. (Nobody would think of legs in connection with Pierce.)' (TS: 131; emphasis original).[124] Again, attention is drawn to the 'unmentionable' by mentioning it. Talking of 'nether limbs' instead of 'legs' and adding a further comment in brackets simultaneously portrays Father Pierce as a supposedly morally superior person and mocks the moral conventions of the society as well as the moral superiority the man in question probably prided himself on. In the entry dated March 29, 1903, written by Nora, she extends the joke and pretends to be Maud's (or Maude's) moral superior: '[Y]our humble servant was ensconced on the sofa with her extremities (suppose Miss L.M. would say legs!) elevated on a chair' (TS: 132). McDonald-Rissanen (2001: 43) notes, referring to Leona Toker's (1993) work, that some gaps in women's writing do not merely stem from aesthetic reasons but are 'a response to a language that had not been shaped by women's experience'. Both Nora and Maud make ruthless fun of late Victorian paranoia of certain words and concepts such as legs, garters, petticoats and, ultimately, sex.

Maud's and Nora's response to male-centred language is clear. They bluntly fill the gaps with Women's Experience in capital letters. There are several examples of this subversive strategy in the diary. The main theme of the diary novel – romance or rather a mock version of it – is a never-ending source of mockery of the unspoken

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122 The correct date is March 22 (Sunday), since Nora's previous entry is dated 'Sat. Mar. 21' (TS: 130). Montgomery consistently misdates the entries in the typescript, which is not atypical of her. In the entry of June 3, 1909 of the personal journal, she admits, 'I can never remember dates' (*CJ2*: 228). However, the fact that the two women clearly do not pay much attention to referring to a correct date demonstrates that the dates function as titles rather than as actual dates. See for instance the entry of February 6, 1903 (TS: 122).

123 The Cavendish Literary Society was founded in Cavendish in 1886 and offered debates, lectures and readings (Epperly 2008: 96). It was one of the few social activities that were not organized by the church.

124 Father Pierce or Pierce Macneill was a local moral guardian, according to Litster (2005: 96).

in society. One of the most unspoken concepts is sexuality and the moral codes that surround it. Montgomery writes in her personal journal in the entry dated January 7, 1910 about her Sunday School teachers' attitude to 'matters of sex' which, according to the narrator, was 'something necessary but ugly – something you were really ashamed of, although you had to have it – or go to hell!' (*CJ2*: 263) Women were not considered sexual beings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Cavendish community, and on several occasions Nora and Maud draw attention to this and to the double standard restricting men and women's behaviour.

For example, Maud writes in the January 20, 1903 entry: 'He [Russell Macneill] informed us that one young lady who was there had a blue bow on. The inference being that she had nothing else I <u>blushed</u>' (TS: 115; emphasis original). Underlined words in the diary denote an ironic tone of voice and are used extensively to mark private jokes and puns. Here the underlining of the word 'blushed' gives it a double meaning in which the narrator portrays the narrated I as a proper lady, who is coy and innocent confronted with a daring joke, and simultaneously makes fun of such behaviour. Nora makes use of this strategy later in the diary by creating a scene in which the assumed roles of mothers and unmarried women are juxtaposed: 'They [the Clarks] entertained us all the evening with Maggie's baby and the afflictions of her big toe. Later on [...] the baby wet Maggie's apron. Oh dear me, I do not know how ... I suppose it spilled water on it. The act did not damp her maternal enthusiasm however' (June 21, TS: 145). By staging the role of a seemingly clueless unmarried woman, Nora makes fun of the expectations of the society and motherly figures as well.

Another extended joke and example of mentioning the unmentionable is the yellow garter incident, which employs many of the strategies mentioned above. The background story to the garter joke is that Nora has supposedly stolen Maud's yellow garter – although it is strongly hinted that it is one of Maud's beaux who has taken it – and for several entries both writers employ the case of the missing garter in order to tease each other. Litster (2005: 95) mentions that, fittingly enough, in North American folklore yellow garters were believed to be good luck symbols and ensure marriage if worn constantly from Easter Monday. Since nothing in the secret diary seems unintentional or without double meaning, the main idea behind the garter joke can be traced back to this symbolic aspect. Garters were also seen as 'extremely intimate and sexual garments', as Goodman (2013: 63) notes.

Much of the humour, then, stems from the irony of garters and other 'unmentionable garments' constantly being referred to in the diary as well as their role in highlighting the two female characters as man-crazy and eager to get married.

Beginning with the entry dated January 22, 1903, written by Maud, the case of the missing garter demonstrates that whether it was actually stolen by Nora or not, a trick such as this makes perfect material for the diary novel about two women trying to secure a husband and engaging in mock rivalry with each other. Maud writes: 'When I woke up this morning I found that one of my garters was missing and hunt as I might I could not find it. [...] I suppose Nora made away with it out of some mean, malicious petty spirit of revenge. The loss has cast a gloom over my entire day' (TS: 116). She ends the entry by a parodied Scottish ditty: 'Oh, where, tell me where has my yellow garter gone? / [...] I dinna ken what dreadful fate my garter has befel [sic] / But it's, oh, in her heart that Nora kens full well' (TS: 116).[125]

Nora in turn protests her innocence in the entry of January 26, 1903 by writing a counter-rhyme: '"There are lots of things in this old world I don't pretend to know / And Maude may think perhaps that I am a trifle slow ...." Well ... humph ... but one thing I do know / I never stole her dern old yellow garter! So there!' (TS: 117; emphasis original). She goes on to mention that the 'garter discussion has become a dissipation with us, a wily, seductive habit that seems to be growing upon us with marvellous rapidity' (TS: 117), which tells something of its contrived nature in the diary's narrative. Nora continues by characterising herself as Maude's moral superior and Maude as her opposite: 'I heaved a sigh of relief when Mrs. C. came to the house for I thought surely delicacy would keep that yellow article out of sight, but not a bit of it. Maude, with that delightful candor that is so characteristic of her, informed Mrs. C. that I had stolen her garter' (TS: 117). The talk about the yellow garter is daring, but once again what is at play here is drawing attention to that which should not be discussed and then discussing it.

Religion is another recurrent theme that is parodied so as to subvert it. Living in a society where religion set most of the rules and was still the major force guiding people's lives, it is not surprising that as much as moral rules are made fun of, so is religion. Most of the social life centred on church activities, such as prayer and missionary meetings, and they were almost the only social events in the rural areas of Prince Edward Island. Notably, these were also the social events where women and men met each other, and the church thus played a major part in enabling, but also controlling, people's romantic lives. Accordingly, Nora and Maud portray themselves as good – almost too good – Christians. This is especially true of 'Maude' with her church duties, but as can be expected, the two diarists have 'some difficulty in keeping [their] wayward feet in Sunday line' (TS: 120), not least when it comes to questions of the heart.

For instance, in the February 6, 1903 entry, Nora depicts a ride back home with

125 According to Litster (2005: 105), the song parodied here is a Scottish song 'The Bluebells of Scotland'.

one of the suitors: 'Jo Stewart (the little brat!) came up to drive us home' (TS: 122). During the ride, they encounter the object of Nora's and Maude's mock infatuation, James Stewart, who offers a ride for 'one of the ladies' (TS: 121). Nora ends up driving with James and in response to Maud's entry about the same day, in which she writes that 'Nora joyfully skipped out of our sleigh and into James" (TS: 122), Nora exclaims: 'How I loathe and detest the creature [James]! Did I ever imagine I could come down to even sitting beside him in a sleigh?' (TS: 122). Interestingly enough, although fake, the angrier tone that surfaces in relation to it being 'Sabbath eve' juxtaposes the proper conduct expected of Sunday evenings and the reality: 'Although it is Sabbath eve, "A feeling of <u>hate</u> comes o'er me that my soul cannot resist"' (TS: 122; emphasis original).

Nora finishes the entry by returning to the obedient role, 'I will stop for I am sure this is Sabbath-breaking', although in brackets she states that '(I don't care if it is Sunday night I will say a "cuss word" for it is only one thousandth of what is inside me[])]' (TS: 122). Notably, the tone of the entry is given an even more ironic twist, since it is dated 'Friday, Feb 6th' not 'Sunday'. It seems likely that Nora was actually writing the entry on Sunday (February 8), or begun writing it on Friday and finished by Sunday. Since both women are covering the events of the same day (February 6, Friday night), it makes sense for them to date both entries accordingly.[126]

In Maud's entries references to religious discourse and the Bible are as common as they are in her personal journals. However, in the secret diary the tone is notably different with hardly any serious note, which probably presents a more realistic image of the type of religious duties that Montgomery overtook throughout her life. In this example from the February 13, 1903 entry, Maud pokes fun at their man-craving characters by quoting a hymn that gets a new meaning (a popular story in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century newspapers): 'Nora and I are in desperate want of someone to take us to the party and have gone around all day singing this doleful ditty. "Oh, for a man … a man … a man … A man … sion in the skies"' (TS: 124). In the previous entry, dated February 10, she bluntly complains: 'I must now tog up and wade out in the snow to choir practice for that old missionary meeting … may the pigs get it' (TS: 124).

Some angrier tones surface when Maud writes about walking to a Baptist prayer meeting with 'snowing, blowing and slush to our knees' (TS: 135) and connects the dreary walk with a wish of having stayed home and 'read my "expurgated edition" of Adam Bede' (TS: 135). She continues:

126 It could well be that Nora wrote three different entries on the same day (Sunday, February 8, 1903), since the successive entries dated 'Friday, Feb 6th, 1903', 'Sat. 7th.' and 'Sunday, Feb 8th' are all written by her.

> Right here I might remark that Nora has been poking fun at me because of this. She thinks it quite a good joke apparently. But I do not care. I think when one is pure-minded one should endeavor to remain so and not risk their soul reading such dreadful books as ADAM BEDE in the original!!! (TS: 135)

A comment that might sound earnest is seen in another light when connected with additional information about the local authorities' attitude to George Eliot's book. According to Litster (2005: 96), in a 1890s Literary Society meeting a local minister had said that George Eliot led an immoral life and her works were not safe to read, especially for the young. Maud evidently refers to this comment when she vents her anger of moral hypocrisy by staging herself in the role of an obedient and pure-minded young woman in a mocking way, as signalled by three exclamation marks, and links this portrayal with the frustration of having to frequent prayer meetings in bad weather.

In a similar vein, Nora attacks a topic on which women have traditionally had little to say – the supposedly true view of the female nature. In two entries the narrator (Nora) portrays the narrated I as a stereotypical hysterical female. The first from January 22, 1903, is in the presence of a doctor: 'The doctor was standing by the bed with his arms loosely folded over the broad convexity of his stomach, idly watching the "hysterical" female in pale blue, tossing and groaning on the bed' (TS: 115). The scene is depicted from the position of the 'male gaze' with the conventional powerful male – a doctor with a fat stomach suggestive of his wealthy position – looking at the objectified female 'tossing and groaning'. The narrating I distances herself from the scene so that the narrated I becomes more of a caricature whose portrayal serves as a commentary on the way female behaviour is categorised by the male authorities. 'Hysterical' being inside inverted commas further supports this reading.

The second example, from February 6, 1903, describes the effect of seeing one of the beaux, thus bringing hysteria from the medical discourse into the realm of everyday romance:

> We arrived safely at the hall and were scarcely seated when Maude observed that the object of our affections had arrived. My heart jumped as it generally does on such occasions. It did not come into my mouth however, as it is accustomed to do in most "hysterical females" the reason being there was no room on account of some choice "cuss words". (TS: 122)

Combined here are two portrayals of femininity. The narrator (Nora) juxtaposes the assumed way of conduct – heart jumping and hysterical excitement – and the reality – cursing. The ideal is undermined by the reaction of a more realistic female character and that is where the humour stems from too.

Developing the stereotype Nora writes towards the end of the diary, in the June 21, 1903 entry, about their supposed reaction to hearing James Stewart mentioned: '*Of course* Maude's heart came into her mouth and I blushed' (TS: 145; emphasis added). Such examples prove that both Nora and Maud were more than familiar with the common medical and religious as well as romantic language of the day and the engendered stereotypes they created and helped to support. By bringing them forth in their fictional diary, they were able to not only vent their own frustration but also present a more realistic version of the lives of women.

4.2 MOCK ROMANCE AND CHARACTERISATION

The theme most ridiculed in the diary, however, is romance. Making fun of men and each other in the process as well as the clichéd romantic conventions is the principal theme of the two authors. The characters called 'Nora and Maude' are depicted competing in securing a husband in mock seriousness while simultaneously flirting with as many eligible bachelors as possible. The numerous beaux who drive Nora and Maud to countryside events, such as prayer meetings, and the narrators' pretended infatuation to them are described in embellished and parodical language. This style can be exemplified by Nora's first diary entry (or chapter) dated January 19, 1903:

> Bro. William called to inquire for me this eve and of course that cheered my palpitating heart … or rather that part of my anatomy which answers to a heart. [F]or since I met Dear James … tears … well, words are inadequate. What is an aching void? For three weeks I have been trying to find out and now at last, oh glorious revelation! Maude's hollow tooth and my headache. (TS: 114)

The use of expressions such as 'palpitating heart' and 'oh glorious revelation' familiar from romance novels and religious texts are downplayed by humorous combinations, such as the very mundane ailments of toothache and headache. The pompous style that continues throughout the diary contributes to creating the sarcastic tone of the entries and reveals the writers' real attitude to romantic topics.

Nora's first entry also tactically introduces one of the 'leading men' in the secret diary, 'Dear James' or James Alexander Stewart, a local farmer who is mercilessly made fun of throughout the diary. Maud remarks in the entry of February 5, 1903

that ‘our only resource has been to discuss the soulful James in all his aspects. He has more than replaced the garter. When the latter was found that was an end of its usefulness. But the interest in James is perennial’ (TS: 121). Equating James with the lost garter not only objectifies the man, but also shows that his significance is that of a joke. Nora and Maud compete over his attention while it is evident that the poor man is rather shy and awkward and neither of the two female characters is really interested in him. James, as all the other men courting them, has his fair share of nicknames – the Soulful, James Alec, the Soulful One – and provides much amusing material for the writers: ‘When James begins to look sentimental out of those soulful orbs of his it is enough to make one turn Mohammedan or Mormon’ (TS: 127).

The storyline about James continues almost throughout the diary, but why he is the main focus of Nora and Maud’s comic attentions is not overtly explained. References to this unfortunate man are a peculiar blend of pretentious admiration and rivalry over him and open contempt. Nora and Maud both pretend to be in love with James while simultaneously scorning him. Nora wonders in the entry of January 26, 1903, after having been away, what Maude ‘tried to steal from me while I was away’, referring to the yellow garter incident: ‘My James, heart and hand, bag and baggage. […] All clean gone and swept out of my life like magic!” (TS: 118). To this Maud responds with a comic song, as if to finish an episode within a story: ‘Oh, young Jamie Stuart came out of the west / Through all the wide border his steed was the best, / He stayed not for brake and he stopped not for stone, / He drove up to the post-office where gate there was none, / But ere he alighted at the post-office door / Nora had gone to New Glasgow and his hopes were all o’er’ (TS: 118).

Similarly, in the February 13, 1903 entry, Maud first refers to James in the framework of romantic competition:

> The Soulful was there [at choir practice] and he drove me home all by my lone. Nora felt so bad when I came home and told her that she had to put a mustard plaster on her heart before she went to bed. Last night there was practice again and Nora went but James did not appear so she felt pretty blue. She pretends she does not care but that is all bluff. (TS: 124)

She then turns the tables by mentioning bad weather: ‘It has been storming furiously all day. Nobody seemed to be abroad’ (TS: 124). However, the reliable James pays a visit ‘in the worst of it’, to which Maud snorts contemptuously: ‘Evidently no weather can squelch <u>him</u>’ (TS: 124; emphasis original), turning her mock-admiration into a mean remark.

Eventually, though, apparently even James' patience has its limit, since he deserts the two women, although soon enough comes back. Maud remarks for instance in the March 22, 1903 entry: 'Dear James has, I fear, deserted us both at last. We have seen nothing of him for over a fortnight' (TS: 130). In the following entry of March 29, 1903 she goes on to note that 'last night it [the weather] turned as cold as James' recent manner' (TS: 131). Nevertheless, tallying with the burlesque style of the diary, James magically reappears already in the next entry by Nora (March 29, 1903): '[T]his is the week that James came back to us! […] [A] step sounded at the door and in walked the long-lost James. […] Maude grinned and clasped the RAM'S HORN [magazine] to her fluttering breast' (TS: 132). Rather than illustrating James' actual behaviour, these incidents demonstrate that when something needs to happen for the plot to make it more interesting, Nora and Maud use their artistic liberty to dramatise even the most mundane events.[127]

The May 6, 1903 entry, written by Maud, finishes the tale of James and proves that he is merely a romance victim of the two women. For instance, Maud recounts how Nora has taken advantage of the man: 'Coming home Nora informed me that she had been nice to James for the purpose of getting him to take us to Rustico the next evening and that he had fallen into the trap and we were to get' (TS: 138). Sunday night the mistreated James finally bids his farewell 'for he was going to east to his new farm the next day' (TS: 139). As if to underline the artificial nature of the secret diary, Maud writes: '[S]o that chapter in our "romance" is closed. Heaven only knows what we will do for a joke now unless Providence raises us up some new victim' (TS: 139). Indeed, based on this excerpt, it is evident that the secret 'diary' was actually written as a satirical romance.

Both writers thus use the conventional language of romantic fiction in order to underline what they are really doing – making fun of men and the marriage market. Nora describes a scene with one of the beaux in the entry of February 17, 1903 and does not hold back her sarcastic comments: 'I tried my very best to appear interested and when he asked me if I would like to be a missionary I said 'yes' and clasped my hands in an ecstasy of delight as the vision arose before me of Jerry and I away in western lands teaching the Indians, but somehow it was no use' (TS:

127 Nora and Maud also take liberties to write each other into scenes which were probably very different in reality, as Maud does in the February 1, 1903 entry depicting Nora's anger over missing James: 'Late at night Nora arrived home in a vile state of mind […]. The real reason she was so mad was that she found out that "the soulful James" had been here that evening when she was absent and she had missed him' (TS: 119). Part of the fun in the two women writing their fictional diary is that they can write whatever they want of the other 'character'.

125).[128] The two characters deride the assumption that women are always thrilled by the attentions of a man. Maud writes in unison: 'James dear favoured us with a call Friday afternoon. […] How my heart went pitty-patter when I heard his well-known footfall' (TS: 132). Expressions such as 'clasp one's hands in ecstasy' or 'heart going pitty-patter' are hard to take seriously, especially when the two writers' attitude towards love is so obviously satirical.

Furthermore, as if poking fun at her own personal journal in which several romantic scenes are created with the age-old cliché of a moonlit night, Maud writes in the June 7, 1903 entry about a walk home from church with two beaux: 'Then Sunday evening Bob and Henry walked home with us and we caught a fresh dose of cold hanging around making love by moonlight. That does well in "theory" but fails in being "practical"' (TS: 143). Even though she is not ready to admit it in her journals, in which 'making love by moonlight' works well on the page, Montgomery here presents a more realistic version of (mock) romantic encounters and even her own romantic discourse in the journals.

Besides making fun of men, Nora and Maud poke fun at the assumption that the entire existence of women during their time was supposed to evolve around securing a husband. Nora's tongue-in-cheek comment serves as an example: 'I forgot to say we had our fortunes told during the eve and mine turned out to be an "immediate marriage" so that is encouraging' (TS: 125). There are also a few references to the belief that sleeping with a piece of wedding cake under one's pillow would make one dream of the future spouse (Gammel 2005c: 84): 'I ran out to give Bob a bit of wedding cake and he drove off with the remark that he hoped he'd dream about me …' (TS: 146; emphasis original). As in the yellow garter joke, folklore of this kind mirrors the attitudes of the time. Marriage and marriage alone was the acceptable goal for women.

So be it then, Maud and Nora seem to signal in their diary by exaggerating this idea. The diary is full of beaux and boy talk, but the irony stems from the contrast of portraying the narrated Is as 'man crazy' while simultaneously depicting the men as complete fools. All of the men are consistently presented as wrong suitors, with the two women creating a satirical version of the typical romance plot. By introducing this horror cabinet of men, the secret diary contrasts with and corroborates Montgomery's personal journals, in which the critique of the marriage market and the romantic conventions is not quite so sharp.

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128 The beau in question is Jeremiah S. Clark who worked as a missionary to the natives (Gammel 2005c: 33).

Nora and Maud point to the bitter irony of women having to fight over suitable husband candidates, even if those men do not possess intelligence or wit.[129] Maud depicts a dialogue with the Soulful James that underlines this fact in the February 18, 1903 entry: 'Nora wouldn't talk so I had to. If I stopped there would be a horrible silence and after vainly racking my brains I would at last remark, "We've been having some storms lately." And James would respond, "Yes, the moon is in her last quarter"' (TS: 126). Following the sharp social satire of Jane Austen, the diary novelists underline the ridiculousness of the rules and conduct of society by trivial and awkward dialogue. Depicting the dullness of entertaining the prospective suitors, the secret diary suggests that after all, married women are still higher on the social ladder than spinsters, however much fun unmarried women might have in their pursuit.[130]

For instance, Maud depicts a Thursday night in the entry dated April 5, 1903, which contrasts the genuine-sounding intimate scene with Nora and the mind-numbing entertaining of the suitors:

> Thursday evening at sunset […] Nora and I started for a ramble through Lover's Lane. We expected it would be mud to our ears. Instead we found excellent sleighing and banks of snow over the fences. […] We had not been home long 'when footsteps were heard at the door' and in marched our two long-lost, lamented 'jays' [James and Joe]. Then Nora and I had to straighten up and begin to talk small talk. They sat and sat until my resources were exhausted. (TS: 133)

In addition to drawing attention to how tiresome the gentlemen callers might be, Maud evaluates the 'selection of men' as if they were groceries in a store: 'We have certainly had several callers this week but I fear they are a rather poor assortment' (TS: 133). Only one suitor (George Macneill) provides some entertainment, so that 'Nora and I got through the evening without wishing to commit suicide' (TS: 133). This is quite a striking contrast to the expected romantic reactions of a woman entertaining her beaux and it demonstrates that Montgomery was able to openly express the more negative feelings she had towards romance and men in this secret co-authored diary novel.

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129 Cavert (November 3, 2014, email to the author) notes that by the time Nora and Maud were writing the diary 'everyone [in Cavendish] would have decided that Montgomery had no interest in any local men and … Nora did not either'. According to Cavert (November 3, 2014, email to the author), 'Nora was always destined to marry her childhood sweetheart, which she did at age 30'.

130 Of all Montgomery's books, the one that deals with this inequality in detail is *The Blue Castle* (1926).

Although some portrayals of the men in the secret diary might have a hint of truth in them, the male characters generally serve the purpose of butts of jokes in the narrative, highlighting the heroines' wit and the gender-inequality in society, and are thus as constructed characters as the protagonists Nora and Maude. However full the secret diary is of men, the male characters still remain secondary characters while the two main characters Nora and Maude play several roles. If one views the secret diary as a diary novel rather than an actual diary, it becomes clear that the alter egos of Nora Lefurgey ('N. L.' in the diary, after each entry or chapter) and L.M. Montgomery ('L. M. M.') are highly dramatised and fictionalised caricatures.

The two women create fictional diary characterisations of themselves, who vary from funny and frivolous flirts to obedient God-fearing Presbyterians. Litster (2005: 101) points out that both Nora and Maud 'adopt a variety of roles to serve their plot' and that each has a defined role to play. However, these 'roles' do not denote real-life Nora and Maud in any uncomplicated way. 'Nora and Maude' are not merely roles they play, but literary characters or, as Culley (1985: 12) puts it, selves that are a fiction and a construction. This explains why one finds portraits of a hysterical female, a shallow and man-crazy girl and a bookish woman, who hides from visitors, under the sign 'Nora'. Furthermore, these diverse roles are connected by irony and parody – so much so that parody can be seen as the glue that holds the whole diary together and implies how it should be interpreted.

Just as in Montgomery's personal journals, differentiating between the narrating I and the narrated I is pivotal and helps in analysing the diary's multiple levels of meaning. Indeed, most of the humour in the diary results from the ironic gap between the tone of the narrating I and the description of the narrated I, as in this example: 'Nora says I am not a <u>decent</u> person. I don't know whether to be mad or not. I wish I had asked the minister when he was in' (TS: 113; emphasis original). The narrator (Maud) portrays the narrated I (Maude) as an obedient Presbyterian and a simple country girl while her tone is rather frivolous. This is emphasised by an earlier comment: 'Then we had tea. Somehow or other <u>grace</u> was interrupted. I hope it will not impair digestion' (TS: 113; emphasis original). The narrator parodies a common reaction most likely familiar in the surrounding farming community.

In fact, sometimes the gap between the fictional alter egos and the two more or less real authorial persons is so wide that the contrast affects the text. In the March 21, 1903 entry, Nora writes about herself in the third person when the roles become too hard to fuse: 'Miss Lefurgey, the mistress of Cavendish public school, read a paper on Lord Byron' (TS: 130). During the writinging of the diary, Nora was working as a teacher in Cavendish, whereas Maud too had worked as a school-

teacher and was now a well-established writer. In real life, these official roles were of course very tangible to Nora and Maud, but in the secret diary they become as fictional as all the other roles of the characters. This process can be seen in Nora referring to herself as teacher in the third person, as if the teacher Nora has nothing to do with the diary-character Nora.

The difficulty to combine the diverse personas stems from the way both writers stage the bad girl in the secret diary, as Gammel (2005c: 17) puts it. The bad girl character is a familiar one especially for Montgomery, who in her first personal diary as a nine-year-old mimicked the naughty 'Little Gorgie' in Metta Victor's *A Bad Boy's Diry* and 'schemed and planned many naughty tricks' (*CJ2*: 54) so that she could then write about them (see Litster 2005: 97–98). Just as the burlesque and the carnival, this is a strategy of trying out a role one is never able to play out in real life. Nora the teacher or Maud the church organist could never have acted so callously in the local community, 'hamming it up centre-stage in the roles of popular flirts' (Litster 2005: 101). In the secret diary, on the other hand, there is no need to even try to act properly, as Nora exclaims in the March 3, 1903 entry: 'I think I can safely say that neither of us had any desire to flirt but alas!' (TS: 128).

Furthermore, the character creation in diary writing can be understood by analogy to drama, not merely to prose fiction. In her article 'Mimesis: The Dramatic Lineage of Auto/biography' Hinz (1992) specifies auto/biography's close connection to drama. She criticises the supposed analogy between auto/biography and prose fiction and suggests that auto/biography's 'sister-art' in fact is drama (Hinz 1992: 195). Hinz (1992: 199) points to the fact that for example 'in the novel we delight in the pretence of imitation and the absence of constraints, whereas in drama and auto/biography freedom is the illusion and the pleasure (and pain) principle arises from contending with the reality principle'. Definitely, then, even the secret diary is tied to reality, even though it is so clearly fictional. While it can be read as a diary novel (or play), it is not purely fiction, and has its origins in the real events of the world Nora and Maud live in.

Hintz (1992: 199) goes on to claim that both in drama and auto/biography the readers' enjoyment stems from knowing that the subject can never be ultimately defined and that what we as readers are witnessing is a performance. The drama analogy fits the secret diary especially well because it is so full of theatrical acts, word play, roles, characters and comical settings. As Litster (2005: 101) puts it: 'If the diary is thereby part Shakespearian comedy with marriage as the desired outcome, it is also part pantomime, part farce, and part musical play'. For instance, in the entry dated May 17, 1903, Nora composes odes to two beaux, Bob and Henry,

that are like comic sideshow numbers between the acts: ""The hue of his [Bob's] hair was whitish brown, / His body was lean and his neck was slim, / One eye was turned up, the other turned down / But he loved the girls and was strong of limb"' (TS: 140).

Furthermore, many entries feature dialogue and dramatic events, just as in Montgomery's own personal journals, in which the events are dramatised. In an entry dated May 6, 1903, Nora paints a vivid scene of an unexpected suitor coming for a surprise visit:

> Last Friday I took half a day off to attend the only social function that Cavendish knows … a funeral. I came home in a very "lugubrious" frame of mind […] when my eyes caught sight of a stalwart form steering for the door. I rushed to the foot of the stairs and in a helpless voice howled out, "Maude, Artie is here!!!!" "For heaven's sake," came the muffled response from the bottom of Eaton's dry-goods box. Seconds passed, minutes ditto, and no Maude appeared but Artie was patient and at length she arrived. (TS: 137)

So strong is the theatrical atmosphere in the diary that it seems the play-acting the two women engage in extends beyond the written page. Nora recounts a sailing expedition in the entry of June 21, 1903 and states: 'It was perfectly lovely and *as we had an audience* we fought all the time' (TS: 146; emphasis added). Whether writing in their 'diary' or going sailing in real life, Nora and Maud treat the world as their stage and are always keen to have an audience.

Connected to this theatricality is language, which in the secret diary for the most part is highly colloquial and has, according to Litster (2005: 101), firm grounding in oral culture and local sayings. The relaxed language is similar to the style of the early entries in Montgomery's personal journal, only even more strikingly informal and conversational, as in the entry of June 7, 1903: 'Dash Bob and Henry! I went to town with many misgivings. And sure 'nuff that Bob came up and took Nora driving one night so I guess I'm out of it for good. I don't care I'm sure. James has bought a lovely place down at Bridgetown!' (TS: 143). Maud portrays the narrated I as a jealous schoolgirl, familiar from her own early journal entries, by giving her the voice of one, with expressions such as 'Dash Bob and Henry!' Like an actor creating a character, the narrator makes sure every detail is correct, starting from the way of speaking and getting the tone right – with the possible exception of the rather formal phrase 'with many misgivings'.

An important part of the creation of the characters in the diary is gossip, again a very theatrical and low-brow device, which combines oral culture and drama, and often ties the seemingly random entries of the diary together (see e.g. Spacks

1985). Developing the topic of the June 7, 1903 entry, mentioned above, Maud writes in the next entry of June 19, 1903: 'Annie did not seem inclined to talk about James although Maggie introduced the subject and poor Nora pricked up her ears wistfully, hoping she was going to hear something about that Bridgetown farm. But no, Annie, dear girl, was not in a communicative mood' (TS: 143). Bridgetown farm was a property outside of Cavendish, which the object of Nora and Maude's mock crush, the 'Soulful James' had purchased, and Maud deliberately hints at it in both entries in order to tease Nora. As well as providing (or not providing) information, gossip also works as a narrative tool that connects the themes of the entries and serves the story.

Gossip also materially ties in with romance, since so much of the gossip in the secret diary involves men and romantic themes. As Maud notes, in a tongue-in-cheek tone, in the March 29, 1903 entry, 'Nora and I both went visiting yesterday and came home with all the gossip in C. [Cavendish] with which we regaled each other in bed' (TS: 132). She then lists what the 'items' are, as for instance that 'Pierce and Albert have had a fight, that Neil S. has made an excellent choice, and that Nora's influence over Gordon is considered adverse to his spiritual life' (TS: 132). In other words, all the gossip involves the real or not so real doings of the various suitors. It is noteworthy that gossip also acts as a bond between the two women, since they share it in the intimate setting of a bed. In the March 7, 1903 entry, Maud gives another example of how gossip functions in their surrounding society and how it regulates and feeds on romance, whether imagined or real. She depicts how a male friend approaches her after church to inform her that he cannot 'get down "to see [her]"' to discuss a Literary Society newspaper: 'You should have seen the people rubber. I suppose they immediately scented a romantic romance' (TS: 129).

Gammel (2005b: 9) writes in her introduction to *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery* that 'Montgomery's teasing banter [in the secret diary] presents a new voice that is distinctly different from that of the journals'. The voice is indeed completely different from the dramatic and introverted style of the personal journals. But the characters created in the secret diary – the shallow flirt, 'dutiful, if reluctant, church-worker' (Litster 2005: 100) and the burlesque Maude – can all be found in the personal journals too. We have already met the flirtatious schoolgirl character in the early entries of Montgomery's journal (see chapter 2), even though the tone and style in them is somewhat different, that is, less self-ironic and usually without a hint of humour. In fact, in the secret diary Montgomery creates a parody of her former diary self with the aid of hyperbolic and sarcastic language, which shows how aware she is of the characterisation that takes place in the journals. In

the secret diary, the portrayal of the light-minded girl has more daring tones to it, but also more humour.

It is noteworthy that the style variations can often be attributed to a change in audience, as already mentioned.[131] The phenomenon called *register* in linguistics and discourse analysis affects diary writing like everything else. Although Gammel's (2005b: 9) point concerning the shockingly different voice found in the secret diary is valid, the change in register in the two diaries is also highly logical. In the secret diary Montgomery writes with and for Nora, in the personal journal mostly for herself and for the future audience, hence the change in register. However, even in the personal journals there are instances where the style resembles that of the secret diary, because Montgomery is writing to an audience more directly. As mentioned above, one example is the early entries of the first volume, the schoolgirl years. Similarly, when Montgomery is sharing a room with a fellow student, Mary Campbell, in Prince of Wales College, or visiting her cousins in Park Corner, the style of the entries changes to a more casual and jocular one, since the audience is familiar and present.[132]

Even the seemingly improvised secret diary offers a glimpse of how Montgomery controlled her authorial and autobiographical persona, especially if one reads the 'diary' as a diary novel. Litster (2005: 98) notes that 'the anguished journalist' of the personal journals was surprised and discomforted by the frivolous Maude of the secret diary. Something of the discomfort of Montgomery the journal writer can be heard in this light-hearted comment from the secret diary: 'If Nora were writing this journal alone what a fearful mass of misstatements it would be. Fortunately I am in the biz. too, and so can correct her terrible fibs about my character' (TS: 136). It is interesting to note that a writer can supposedly be shocked by her own creation and the inability to control the shaping of the text. To be sure, character-forming in life-writing is not always done intentionally, but the created character can sometimes be formed by the writing act itself. Even though the theme and style of the secret diary were carefully and consciously chosen by the two authors, Montgomery was still apparently shocked by the outcome, mainly because she had such a strict control over her posthumous reputation. This discrepancy may be the reason why Montgomery left this diary out when she copied her journals into the ledgers.

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131 A good example is Montgomery's letters to her childhood friend Pensie Macneill. The letters are not edited by Montgomery and present a less controlled and more vernacular style of writing. Most of these letters are published in Bolger (1974).

132 See for instance the entries of March 18, 23 and April 15, 1894 (*CJ1*: 195, 197, 203) on Mary Campbell and February 28, 1892 (*CJ1*: 115) on the Park Corner cousins.

The shared authority and audience in the secret diary furthermore affect the way characters are displayed on its pages. The contrast between the humorous and ironic tone in the diary and the characterisation of the narrated Is as slightly hysterical, overtly romantic but also very angry young women creates a double narrative. In this narrative the friction between the two layers – the portrayal of the narrated Is and the tone of the narrating Is – creates not only humour and parody, but also social commentary in which the ridiculous aspects underline the powerless position of women in the society. Why else would two adult women, more or less independent, write in a style and about a theme that would better suit – in Montgomery's own words – 'a couple of harum-scarum girls in their frivolous teens' (*CJ2*: 70)?[133]

4.3 FROM MOCK TO REAL ROMANCE: EWAN 'THE HIGHLANDER' AND FEMALE INTIMACY

Something of the powerlessness of Nora and Maud in patriarchal society comes across towards the end of the diary and surfaces much more subtly than the louder tones of burlesque and parody. Even if most of the diary is about mock romance and making fun of the pursuit of women to find a husband, its main irony stems from the reference in the final entries to one 'real life' romance, the outcome of which is indeed marriage. This is due to the appearance of Montgomery's future husband Ewan Macdonald (1870–1943) on the stage.[134] As Gammel (2005c: 81) explains in the notes to the secret diary, Ewan was inducted in the Cavendish church in 1903, but he did not move to Cavendish until 1905. He was four years Montgomery's senior and shared her Scottish background, thus the reference in the secret diary to him as 'the Highlander'. Even though Ewan did not yet reside in Cavendish during the writing of the diary novel of Nora and Maud in 1903, according to Epperly (2008: 96), he was active in the Cavendish Literary Society for the three years he served as a minister there between 1903 and 1906. In addition to the Literary Society, Maud and Ewan probably came across each other by their church work. When Ewan was inducted, Mabel Simpson, who had been the organist in the church, resigned and Maud filled her space (Rubio 2008: 115). Maud and Ewan were thus thrown into frequent contact with each other from 1903 onwards (Epperly 2008: 98).

Rather than being a case of actual infatuation, getting engaged to Ewan was more likely a practical choice for Montgomery, who, approaching her thirties, was

133 In 1903, during the writing of the diary, Maud was 28 and Nora almost 23.

134 Ewan's name was actually spelled *Ewen*, but since Montgomery misspells his name throughout the journals as *Ewan*, scholars tend to refer to him accordingly. Both of these spellings appear in the mutual gravestone of Ewan and Montgomery.

aware of the helplessness and low social status of unmarried women. The tragic irony in the secret diary thus derives from knowing that no matter how much fun the two writers make of the rules of society in writing, they are unable to escape them in reality. In the early twentieth century unmarried women were still very much at the mercy of others and Montgomery knew this intimately.[135] During the writing of the diary, Montgomery contemplates the dreary prospects of her future life in her personal journal in the entry of April 12, 1903: 'I am practically alone in the world. Soon youth will be gone and I shall have to face a drab, solitary, struggling middle age. It is not a pleasant prospect' (*CJ2*: 69).

Even though it is purely coincidental that Maud would meet her husband-to-be when composing the secret diary with Nora, it must have tickled the two writers to include in their diary novel mentions of a beau who probably stirred some actual amorous feelings at least in Maud. On the other hand, even though Nora and Maud could not have known when writing their 'diary' that Maud would eventually end up marrying 'the Highlander', in hindsight Ewan's appearance does make an excellent ending for their comic diary romance. Nora and Maude's parodic husband-hunting thus actually provides the desired outcome: marriage. Comparing what is written about Ewan in the secret diary and in Montgomery's personal journals shows that Ewan had no role in the latter as a romantic hero, but in the diary novel of Nora and Maud, he ends up being the male lead, and indeed, the ultimate right suitor on the level of the narrative.

The first mention of Ewan in the secret diary is in the June 21, 1903 entry. Maud writes in her romantic schoolgirl voice:

> This morning we had a Highlander to preach for us and he was "chust lofely" and all the girls got struck on him. My heart pitty-patted so that I could hardly play the hymns. It's weak yet so I shall stop short with this beautiful quotation from Omar Khayam. (TS: 145)

The voice is not serious in any way – the quotation that follows is a mock pastiche[136] – and without historical knowledge of 'the Highlander' it would not seem different from the rest of the mock romances depicted in the diary.

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135 Montgomery was living with her ageing grandmother in a house that would be inherited by her uncle, hence if left unmarried, she would have had to rely on her relatives.

136 'Nora stood on the fishy deck / And hit me on the head, / The sun that shone on Robbie's house / Shone round us o'er the dead (crabs) / Yet beautiful and bright she stood / Bound to brew up a storm, / For Nora will be drowned to death / Before she will reform' (TS: 145).

The next mention of Ewan is in the entry of June 25, 1903, the last entry in the diary by Maud, in which she explains the change in weather by the appearance of Ewan: 'There was a prayer-meeting tonight and perhaps that brought the rain [...]. Those Highlanders must have great influence at the throne of grace' (TS: 146). In her version of the same day Nora teases Maud by writing that 'Monday night Maude had to make an "ice-cream" call (you know she has taken up church work since the young ministers have struck the place)' (TS: 147). Even though in this same final entry (or chapter) of the whole diary Nora mentions other beaux and Maud taking wedding cake to one of them, it is still telling that Maud's interest in Ewan is thus supported from Nora's perspective too.

What is most interesting in these three quotes mentioning Ewan in passing is that they exist at all. The references to 'the Highlander' are instant reactions rather than highly edited later contemplations and they showcase the romantic character Montgomery creates of herself reacting to a prospective suitor. Quite unexpectedly, Montgomery openly reveals her romantic voice in the fictional diary novel and only slightly hides it behind the irony of the diary – something that does not take place almost anywhere else in her autobiographical writings. However, as I will show in the subsequent chapters, fiction is often a safer place for Montgomery to handle themes and topics she cannot write about in her life-writing. In this respect, Montgomery's personal journals are more secretive and private than the 'secret' but shared diary novel of Nora and Maud.

In other words, the way Montgomery writes about her future husband Ewan in her personal journals shows that Montgomery once again carefully constructs the image she wants, just as when depicting other romances. As with so many other beaux and love interests in the personal journals, the question is not whether Montgomery was really in love with Ewan or not. Rather, the way Ewan is introduced in the personal journals tells us what kind of romantic narrative Montgomery wanted to compose in the journals.

Most strikingly, compared to the secret diary, the personal journals fall absolutely silent on Ewan until he and Montgomery are engaged. Considering the fact that Ewan and Montgomery knew each other and interacted since 1903, it is rather peculiar that the journals do not refer to him in any way until the entry of January 26, 1906, in which the narrator shortly states that 'Monday evening Mrs. J. R. Stewart gave a "goose supper" to the members of the Literary Programme Committee. Both the ministers, Messrs. Beleya and Macdonald were there' (*CJ2*: 147). Montgomery does mention Ewan to her pen-friend MacMillan in a letter dated June 29, 1906: 'By the way our minister here is leaving us – Mr. McDonald – and is

going to Scotland for the winter. … We are all very sorry that he is going away as he was well-liked and a successful pastor' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 24).

However, the long retrospective entry of October 12, 1906, which depicts Ewan's and Montgomery's courting and events leading up to their engagement, is in line with the journals, since Montgomery always presents the most important events in her life in such retrospective style. One reason for this is her desire for control – shaping events into an appropriate narrative is easier after the fact – but also her desire not to present her autobiographical self in an undesirable light. The entry was also later rewritten by Montgomery, which is proven by the fact that the pages have been replaced in the original manuscript (UJ2: 399–400). This demonstrates her need to reshape an already written text with knowledge of what will happen later. The entry of October 12, 1906, like the entry that describes Montgomery and Ewan's wedding day (July 5, 1911; see *CJ2*: 416–419), is indeed so full of gaps and silences that it is like a maze where one easily gets lost and is left wondering for whose benefit Montgomery feels the need to present the events the way she does.

As so often in the journals, the narrator begins the October 12, 1906 entry by a dramatic *in medias res*: 'This afternoon Ewan Macdonald called to say good-bye before leaving for Scotland, where he intends studying for the winter at Glasgow University. And I am sitting here with his little diamond solitaire on my left hand!' (*CJ2*: 154). It should be clear by now that rather than being a confessional piece of self-narrating, Montgomery's journals are more like mystery novels where she suspends information from her future readers and never lets out what her true feelings on a given subject are. Thus, revealing her big news on the engagement, the narrator admits that 'it is a surprising thing' (*CJ2*: 154), as if she herself has not had a clue of what had been happening with Ewan. This is further underlined with another similar comment: 'I think nobody could be more surprised at it than I myself. I wonder if I can analyze clearly the events and motives that have led up to it' (*CJ2*: 154).

Given that Montgomery definitely knew exactly what was going on with Ewan – as can be witnessed in the secret diary with Nora – this pretended bafflement and cluelessness combined with the caveat of the narrator wondering whether she can analyse the events clearly should warn the readers that what follows is fictional writing controlled by the author. The beginning of the entry actually resembles that on Herman Leard in the entry of June 30, 1897: 'I do not know if I can write down a lucid account of the events and motives that have led me to this, but I shall try' (*CJ1*: 368). The narrator tactically endears the readers to her by taking up the role of a tortured witness, but the further objective of this repeated sentence is its emphasis

on verisimilitude. By writing up 'a lucid account' or analysing the events 'clearly', Montgomery claims the authority of the story of her own life. No matter that she ends up renaming *Ewen* Macdonald in the history books by misspelling his name 'Ewan' consistently in the journals or that, according to Rubio and Waterston (*CJ2*: 154), Ewan was 36 in 1906, not 34 as Montgomery claims, the version of truth that Montgomery wants to present has to appear to be the only truth to the readers of the journals.

These pages on Ewan are interesting also because by examining the handwritten journal manuscripts, one can tell which parts have certainly been rewritten, since they are on a page inserted later into the ledger. However, this obviously does not mean that the rest of the pages were untouched by Montgomery after she started compiling the journal ledgers from 1919 onwards. Most of the rewritten pages describe Ewan in a tone that is similar to the previous depictions of love affairs in the journals, very unemotional and guarded: 'He [Ewan] was considered a handsome man by many *but I should rather call him fine-looking*' (*CJ2*: 154; emphasis added to denote the section written on a later-inserted page). Some of the comments on the rewritten pages are almost amusing in their foresight of the future: 'He [Ewan] is of medium height, with a good but somewhat stiff figure which is erect and dignified now, but may become "paunchy" in later life' (*CJ2*: 154). Ewan did in fact get 'paunchy' later in life, when Montgomery was writing this new version of their courtship.

Montgomery's description of Ewan's courting repeats the pattern in which the narrated I has the power to control the relationship and the narrating I portrays the men as below her. The narrator remarks, for instance, that 'I did not discover any especial congeniality in him [Ewan] and was not in the least attracted to him. He was not an intellectual man and had no culture in spite of his college education' (*CJ2*: 155–156). In my correspondence with Mary Rubio (September 8, 2009, email to the author), she notes that her reading of this thorough editing is that after the difficulties in their marriage – Ewan's mental illness being the most serious – Montgomery went back and rewrote the original entries, probably downplaying her excitement with the new and handsome husband candidate.

This interpretation is not only supported by what is found in the secret diary about Ewan but also by the narrator mentioning one of her old 'wrong' suitors in the October 12, 1906 entry. In the entry depicting her engagement, the narrator also curiously brings up the story-line with Edwin Simpson, the notorious wrong suitor from the Herman Leard entries, by mentioning that he 'sat in the audience' during Ewan's induction in 1903 (*CJ2*: 154). Apparently Ed tells the narrated I that 'Mr.

Macdonald struck him as "a good-looking boy whose mother had told him to put on his best suit for his ordination"' (*CJ2*: 154).

Even though the narrator claims that she 'had no earthly interest *then* in Ewan Macdonald as a man' (*CJ2*: 154; emphasis added), it is clear that the common pairing up of two suitors in the journals takes place in the October 12, 1906 entry as well. To support this reading, the narrator overtly states: 'I "sensed" somehow that Edwin Simpson did not altogether relish the idea of a young unmarried minister being let loose in the community where *I* lived' (*CJ2*: 155; emphasis original). Edwin Simpson is also mentioned in the secret diary in the February 24, 1903 entry in a very casual tone, which demonstrates that with the exception of Ewan, the diary of Nora and Maud does not really deal with real-life suitors: 'Sunday morning "Prophet Edwin" preached for us. And lo and behold, our minister has resigned. We can be as wicked as we like for awhile' (TS: 128).

The rest of the journal entries on Ewan, depicting their wedding and honeymoon to Scotland in 1911, are equally vague on intimate details and emotions as the October 12, 1906 entry. Montgomery's wedding is covered in a few pages within the long retrospective entry of January 28, 1912, which depicts the events that took place between the death of Montgomery's grandmother (the last entry in the journals is dated March 4, 1911) and Montgomery and Ewan's settling in Leaskdale as a married couple in the autumn of 1911. Notably, the depiction of Montgomery's and Ewan's wedding seems rather artificial as it sounds like something Montgomery could have written in a 'society letters' column during her time as a newspaper woman in the Halifax-based *Daily Echo* in 1901–1902 (see *CJ2*: 25–26): 'I wore my white dress and veil and Ewan's present – a necklace of amethysts and pearls. My bouquet was of white roses and lilies of the valley' (*CJ2*: 417). In fact, *The Complete Journals* reproduces the actual wedding announcement next to this paragraph, in which it says: 'She [the bride] wore a tulle veil with coronet of orange blossoms, and a pearl and amethyst necklace, the gift of the groom and carried a bouquet of white roses, lilies of the valley and maiden hair fern' (*CJ2*: 417).

The only burst of emotion tallies with Ewan's role as a wrong suitor in the journals, since the narrator depicts the narrated I's horror in sitting by her husband's side as a newlywed: 'I felt a sudden horrible inrush of *rebellion* and *despair*. I *wanted to be free*! I felt like a prisoner – a hopeless prisoner. Something in me – something wild and free and untamed – something that Ewan had not tamed – could never tame … rose up in one frantic protest against the fetters which bound me' (*CJ2*: 418; emphases original). In the honeymoon entries, on the other hand, mentions of Ewan are scarce, except for the fact that within these entries the narrator again

adopts the communal pronoun 'we' (see *CJ2*: 419–420 and *SJ2*: 68–81).

As Irene Gammel (2002a: 296–297) has noted, instead of pasting a wedding photo of her and Ewan in the journals, Montgomery includes six photographs of herself in her wedding trousseau. To be sure, '[s]uch framing of the wedding deflates the notion of romanticism that [Montgomery] promoted in her own fiction' (Gammel 2002a: 297) and endorses the status of Montgomery as the female lead of her journals. Furthermore, Gammel (2002a: 297) pays attention to a later photograph in the journals (June 30, 1912), which is 'a classical honeymoon scene … the couple at Niagara Falls'. However, the couple in this instance is Montgomery and her cousin and friend Stella, not Montgomery and Ewan (Gammel 2002a: 297). As Gammel (2002a: 297) aptly states, 'Montgomery transforms the honeymoon photograph into a tribute to intensive female friendship'.

Returning to the secret diary of Nora and Maud, it becomes clear that just as in Montgomery's personal journals, the apparently more sincere romantic scenes in the secret diary do not take place with the male beaux but with Nora. Montgomery's romantic narrative in the personal journals takes up the premise of presenting romances with men in an unromantic light, so it makes sense that the secret diary tallies with this tendency. As I will argue in the next two chapters, it is female intimacy, or romance with women, that fills the place of the conventional romance plot in the personal journals.

Female intimacy has a firm ground in Nora's and Maud's mock diary too, since here the closeness between the two women is established right from the start. Maud writes in the first entry of January 19, 1903: 'I am going to bed. I must make Nora some cocoa first' (TS: 113), and she continues on the topic of sharing a bed in the next entry of January 20, 1903: 'Last night when we went to bed I put a chair by the bed so that if Nora should kick me out during the night I would have something <u>soft</u> to fall on' (TS: 114; emphasis original). Although light on tone and topic, the entries of the secret diary paint a vivid picture of the shared life of two women. During the cold winter months, Nora and Maud shared a bedroom and a bed, to which Maud refers in several occasions. The diary entails an interesting blend of female rivalry and loneliness when the other woman is away. For instance, Maud writes in the January 26, 1903 entry: 'That night I had to sleep alone and actually found myself lonesome', but in the next paragraph rejoices in 'cutting Nora completely out' by securing a ride from Nora's suitor (TS: 116).

It is noteworthy that female intimacy is the only romantic topic that is treated sincerely in the diary. Maud writes that '[Nora] is away tonight […] and I should be as happy as a clam but strange to say I am not. I suppose when one has become

accustomed to being harried and worried and punned to death one kind of misses it when it is lacking' (TS: 119). Even the fact that Nora and Maud are co-authors of their diary novel creates a bond between them, as their writing is a co-operative and intimate endeavour. Furthermore, when Lover's Lane, the wood path Montgomery immortalised in *Anne of Green Gables*, is mentioned in the secret diary, it is not in reference to any of the men. Instead, it is Nora and Maud who take walks in nature and revel in doing so. On February 2, 1903 Nora mentions that 'Maud and I went away through Lover's Lane this eve for a walk and I for one enjoyed it very much' (TS: 120). Note that Maud's name is not spelled 'Maude', as usually in the diary, which attests to the sincere tone in this excerpt. Maud's entry of February 5, 1903 refers to the same walk and brings up the topic of lovers: 'We had a bee-yew-tiful walk that night [...] in Lover's Lane. The only drawback was that there were no lovers, but we contrived to enjoy life tolerably well even so' (TS: 121; emphasis original).[137]

Female intimacy also presents itself in the two women teasing and flirting with each other on the pages of the diary, so much so that the actual romantic lead couple of this mock-serious romance seems to be Nora and Maud. Even though the women discuss their suitors in pretended earnest, as in the entry of February 6, 1903 – 'It is unnecessary to say whom we were discussing. There could only be one person [James]' (TS: 121) –, true intimacy exists between them: 'When I got home at twelve I was almost frozen and more than glad to crawl into a warm bed beside Nora who speedily thawed me out. We laughed and talked for about two hours' (TS: 121). However, in addition to this sincere-sounding close relationship, there are also equally sincere tones of true rivalry between Nora and Maud that surface through the roles of the two writers.

In addition to the characters created on the pages of the secret diary, the writers of the diary, Nora and Maud, also have their diverse characterisations. Nora is the lazy one, who is not always so keen to give her contribution to the diary. For example, Maud writes in the February 1, 1903 entry: 'Some people are born to do things, others to have things done for them. I am one of the former. By the same token Nora is one of the latter. It is her turn to write up in this journal but so far she has wiggled out of it' (TS: 119). Thus, Maud provides more entries in the diary, and by contrast to her 'mightier' pen, Nora expresses her feelings of sometimes being intimidated

137 Montgomery also refers to her walks with Nora several times in the personal journals. For instance, in the May 2, 1903 entry she writes: 'This morning I had a walk back to "the Devil's punch-bowl" for ferns. This spot is a new discovery Nora and I made this spring' (*CJ2*: 71).

by Maud's greater talent as a writer: 'Oh, I wish I could make some sensible poetry. I know she [Maud] will laugh at this' (TS: 140; May 17, 1903). Maud, on the other hand, definitely presents herself as the more experienced writer by referring to her knowledge of newspaper work: 'Of course, as we say in a newspaper office, "errors will creep in"' (TS: 140). However, Nora also pokes fun at this superiority by sneeringly referring to Maud's obsession with the *Ram's Horn* magazine, which published her story in March 1903 (Litster 2005: 99; TS: 132) and to her real-life status as a published author: 'She [Maud] looked up into my face with that longing look which only poets have' (TS: 147).

Nevertheless, even these examples speak of a mutual bond rather than actual jealousy, since as Montgomery herself notes in a later journal entry, Nora and she had a habit of 'ragging' each other, a habit they maintained throughout their friendship (*SJ4*: 186, see also chapter 6). A further testimony to the importance of female intimacy in the secret diary is that Maud's final entry of June 25, 1903 ends with a 'toast' that celebrates the two women's special relationship and presents the men yet again as characters who have no real importance to either Nora or Maud: '"Here's to two girls who were always in it, / Who never lost their heads for a minute, / Played well the game but knew the limit / And yet got all the fun there was in it." Farewell, James, Artie, Bob, Joe, Freddie and all the other heroes whose exploits are set forth in these pages' (TS: 147).

4.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

When discussing the difficulty of interpreting the secret diary, Litster (2005: 89) points out that the diary is actually a long-running private joke with few passages that would make sense on their own. The above-mentioned example of Ewan and other features of the diary prove how hard it is to place diaries and journals in the private/public dichotomy. Bloom (1996: 24), who has analysed the features of 'truly private diaries' and 'public private diaries', shows how diaries, which by definition assume privacy, are very rarely truly private in their form. Bloom (1996: 24) highlights that especially for a professional writer there are no private writings – a case in point being Montgomery's life-writing.[138]

Judged by the characteristics of private and public diaries that Bloom (1996: 25–35) scrutinises, the secret diary would at first glance seem more 'truly private'.

138 See Nussbaum's (1988: 128–140) article in which she discusses the history of the diary form and notes that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries diaries were still largely private in that they were rarely published. However, in the nineteenth century came a turn towards a dual position: diaries could be classified as public or private, since more diaries were published (Nussbaum 1988: 131).

Truly private diaries are 'so terse they seem coded', need extra-textual information to be explained and provide a clear chronology with no foreshadowing or flashbacks (Bloom 1996: 25–28). The co-authored diary novel offers no background information on the characters and events in the diary, as Litster (2005: 89) has noted, and any sophisticated analysis of the text must rely on extra-textual information, no matter how familiar the reader is with Montgomery's life. Furthermore, characterisation in diaries of this kind has no concern with creating an authorial persona and provides no in-depth analysis of subordinate characters (Bloom 1996: 27).

In contrast, Montgomery's personal journals clearly exhibit much more features of Bloom's 'public private' diaries. They are free-standing public documents with a wider scope of themes and subjects and have a greater variation in form and technique (Bloom 1996: 28). The public private diaries, such as Montgomery's, 'circumvent the diary's dailiness' (Bloom 1996: 29) by concentrating on topic rather than chronology and paying attention to scene setting, characterisation, metaphors, symbols and recurrent themes. As texts they are self-contained and self-explanatory with the author of the diary portrayed as the central character, and are usually subject to extensive revision whether or not published (Bloom 1996: 30–33).

The tables get turned, however, as far as audience and romance are concerned in the secret diary and Montgomery's personal journals. These two texts to some extent complicate Bloom's demarcation, since although both can be placed within the matrix, there are features Bloom does not account for. For instance, the definitions of *private* and *public* are not straightforward. Private can be understood meaning either 'intimate' and 'personal', or 'secretive', thus being the opposite of public. The secret diary straddles both in that it is extremely intimate between the two writers and also secretive in not telling everything. Public on the other hand infers 'openness' and usually entails publication, which until 2005 was not the case with the secret diary.

On the other hand, right from its etymology, *public* by definition carries audience at its core.[139] Hence, the secret diary could be defined as a more public document with its overt audience – Nora to Maud and vice versa – and a certain kind of frankness that it entails. Intimate details such as real life romances of Montgomery are more openly discussed in it, because the main audience in the diary is Nora, her confidante. Similarly, Montgomery's 'public private' journals – which resemble an autobiography more than a diary oftentimes – could be defined

139 'Middle English *publique*, from Anglo-French, from Latin *publicus*; akin to Latin *populus* people' according to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/public (March 26, 2015).

as more private because of their secrecy, as is the case with Ewan or the two suitors drama discussed in the previous chapter. The seemingly intimate journals actually give away surprisingly little (see Rubio 2008: 276) and only hint at romantic feeling by vague sentences such as 'Jack S. came down with me and said all manner of nice things to me' (*CJ1*: 217). Furthermore, Montgomery often employs set phrases – 'we had so much fun' or 'no end of fun' – that get repeated and give no real information.

Litster (2005: 98) discusses which of the two journals reveals more of Montgomery herself, the collaborative diary or the more personal journal. She concludes that either the secret diary is essentially fiction or it shows an unfamiliar but true side of Montgomery (Litster 2005: 98–99). As can be seen by the difficulty of defining private and public diaries and the importance of audience in diary writing, Litster's antithesis seems slightly too rigorous. Surely fictionality and several sides of the author can co-exist in autobiographical writing – and by necessity, always do. Even Montgomery's personal journal is full of contrasting and diverse voices that show the author or rather the narrated I in several different lights, as discussed in previous chapters. Life-writing is always a narrative – or a drama – which includes the creation of alternative selves. The fictional aspects are present in life-writing as much as in other genres.

In her examination of the Prince Edward Island newspapers from Montgomery's era, McDonald-Rissanen (2001: 6) concludes that 'how women are depicted and how they depict themselves appear to be two very contradictory stories'. The diary novel of Nora and Maud is a perfect case in point. For example, staging the bad girl is a strategy that both writers employ to vent their exasperation by writing, as is evident in the entries that criticise religion or dismantle male authority by parody. Displaying anger in the text shows the ability to write oneself into a position of power (Litster 2005: 102), which is exactly what Nora and Maud accomplish in their diary novel. They refuse to remain mere objects of desire and admiration, but flaunt their position as writing subjects. In addition, as Litster (2005: 102) has noted, the power of the writing subject includes sexual authority. In a society where men traditionally held the keys to sexuality, the secret diary is a unique document in that it shows how the two women claim part of the sexual power for themselves.

The meaning of the secret diary is pivotal in understanding all aspects of Montgomery's writing, including her fictional works. Since most of Montgomery's novels succumb to general expectations of romance – namely that in the end, the girl gets the boy and they get married –, it is reassuring to see how in other, less public writings, such as the co-authored diary novel, she was able to create alternate

fictions and undermine the conventional romance plot. Interestingly enough, the aspect that most evidently connects the secret diary with Montgomery's fiction is the subversive strategy of humour, irony and parody, even outright comedy at times. As Rubio (1992: 20–21) writes in 'Subverting the Trite', humour is Montgomery's main weapon in dismantling the traditional romance plot and was one of her ways of side-stepping the general public's expectations and publishers' wishes.[140] Reading the secret diary as and in relation to fiction not only shows similarities between the two, but helps to illuminate the diversity and self-consciousness of Montgomery's writing skills. The writer who is able to act as a depressed journalist in her personal journals and simultaneously master the character of a flirting humorist in the secret diary manages to escape all clear-cut definitions, shows her compositional power and invites her readers to the disturbing but fun realms of the burlesque, drama and role play.

140 Rubio (2008: 470) also argues in her biography that Montgomery was 'caught in the difficult position of being damned if she did and damned if she didn't'. According to Rubio (2008: 470), Montgomery had an audience that expected a certain kind of fiction from her and was appalled if she included any explicit 'modern' material. 'Yet when she wrote the light, humorous fiction expected by her publisher and audience, critics like A.L. Phelps condemned her as "ignorant of life"', Rubio (2008: 470) maintains.

CHAPTER 5

FEMALE INTIMACY: FREDE CAMPBELL

This chapter studies in detail Montgomery's representation of her main female romance – the relationship with her cousin, Frederica Campbell. When writing about Frede, Montgomery exposes a sincere-sounding romantic voice so rarely heard in the journals, and overtly juxtaposes her feelings towards Frede and her husband. Whether illustrating interactions with her school-time sweethearts or adult beaux – in other words, when conventional romance is depicted – Montgomery almost always presents the events in an unromantic light. The only exception to this rule is the Herman Leard affair, and even within this main romantic episode in the journals, something is lacking. The two suitors affair is staged according to the conventions of the nineteenth-century domestic or gothic romance, in which Montgomery portrays herself as the conventional romantic heroine. The subversive tone of the journals points in another direction, however, away from the dull harbours of conventional romance and towards a depiction of female intimacy.

Irene Gammel (2005b: 11) observes that 'Montgomery's romantic friendships with women were emotionally intense and gratifying, with no evidence of the angst or guilt that characterized her romantic friendships with men', offering good signposts for future research. *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery* touches upon this aspect of Montgomery's life-writing. The book includes the annotated version of the secret diary of Montgomery and her friend Nora Lefurgey and Jennifer Litster's excellent essay on it, as well as a detailed essay by Mary Beth Cavert that contextualises the historical background of Montgomery's close friendships with Lefurgey and a fan, Isabel Anderson, but there is certainly room for further study.

Laura Robinson (2012: 173), who has studied Montgomery's female friends and lesbian desire in her fiction, points to the lack in Montgomery scholarship: '[F]ew critics investigate the representation of sexuality in Montgomery's journals' (however, see Gammel 2002a: 289–298). Even more importantly, Robinson (2012: 172–173) goes on to claim that while critics might discuss sexuality in Montgomery's fiction, they refer to it as 'romance' not 'sexuality', since they merely study the expected heterosexuality.[141] In short, then, not only has the matter remained

141 I employ the term *romance* throughout my dissertation, however, for reasons explained in 1.5. Romance also works as a stylistic term, referring to the tradition and history of

somewhat brushed off in Montgomery scholarship, but scholars have also struggled to explain or articulate the importance of female friends and relationships to Montgomery, both in her fiction and her life-writing.

Since both conventional romance and romance between women serve specific purposes for the overall representation of love in Montgomery's journals, they must be studied in relation to each other. Rather than claiming that the female romance is somehow more important to Montgomery's journals or even to her life, I argue that Montgomery employs the romance genre as a fictional starting-point and schema for dramatising her own experiences in a textual form. Within this dramatisation, however, the persona of the romantic lover is created in connection to Montgomery's female friends rather than to her male lovers, as is shown when examining the entries depicting Montgomery's life-long emotional relationship with her cousin Frede Campbell.

When discussing Frede's role in the journals, a term such as *female intimacy* might raise questions of sexual identity and real-life passions. Mary Rubio explains in her essay '"A Dusting Off": An Anecdotal Account of Editing the L.M. Montgomery Journals' (2001) what she would now change in her and Elizabeth Waterston's editing process of the journals that they began in the early 1980s. Rubio (2001: 41) observes for instance that the introductions to the published journals should explain the social history and context of Montgomery's writing better, such as the separate spheres into which social decorum divided men and women in the nineteenth century and how female friendships sustained women at this time. According to her, '[l]acking this historical understanding, some people have taken Montgomery's accounts of her affection for her cousin Frede Campbell as lesbianism' (Rubio 2001: 41). Rubio's comment is logical: Montgomery did not identify herself as a lesbian,[142] and reading her journals without a proper historical understanding might cause confusion. On the other hand, when looking at textual demonstrations and descriptions of love, real-life passions become irrelevant. Are contemporary readers of Montgomery's journals really so wrong in their interpretation if they feel the text conveys something that seems much like lesbian love?

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romance as a genre. Nevertheless, I am thankful to Robinson for having pointed out that we indeed usually expect romance to entail a man and a woman, instead of two women, for instance, and my aim is to widen the concept of romance to cover female intimacy.

142 Montgomery underlines this fact in her journal in connection to her intimate fan Isabel Anderson. She writes, decidedly, 'I am not a Lesbian', mainly to protect her posthumous reputation (*SJ4*: 166). As Robinson (2012: 167) has argued, this was necessary for Montgomery at the time when lesbianism and other sexual categories were invented, re-defined and pathologized in the 1920s and 1930s (see also chapter 6).

My intention in this chapter is not to claim that Montgomery was a lesbian or that we need to excavate an underlying homosexual discourse in her journals, especially when taking account the relatively short history of both terms, heterosexuality included (see Katz 1995: 19–20). I am also not interested in the real-life status and type of Montgomery's and Frede's relationship, but rather in the way Montgomery represents her friend as the love of her life and constructs a romantic narrative around their friendship. In other words, I analyse Frede's literary role in Montgomery's journals in the same way I analysed Herman Leard's and Edwin Simpson's literary significance to the life story of Montgomery.

Since Robinson (2004, 2012) has written extensively on lesbian desire in Montgomery's fiction and the changing paradigms of sexuality during her life-time, I will not cover these issues in my chapter.[143] My aim is to examine female intimacy in the context of the overall representation of romance in the journals, conventional romance included. With this kind of parallel viewpoint it is possible to discern that Montgomery's journals establish female intimacy as an equally satisfying, if not even more satisfying, culmination to the romantic plot. Whether this alternative ending to the romantic narrative is an accepted one is dubious (at least during Montgomery's own time), since every time any material from the journals depicting female intimacy is transferred into fiction, it is turned into conventional romancing. Nevertheless, we can note that the romance and diary genres affect and borrow from each other. Moreover, we can ask how Montgomery's romantic narratives change when the genre changes from a fictional novel – thus a more public account – to a personal journal and vice versa.

5.1 TEXTUAL FEMALE LOVE: A FRIENDSHIP BEGINS

Frederica Campbell (1883–1919), Frede for short, was Montgomery's first cousin and, although nine years younger than her, they had spent a lot of time together when Montgomery was visiting her Campbell cousins throughout her childhood and youth at the Park Corner farm. It is safe to say that Frede was undoubtedly the emotional bedrock of Montgomery's life and her most important female friend. As such, Montgomery's and Frede's friendship properly began around the year 1902, when Montgomery was 28 and Frede 19. Montgomery is very precise about the time in her journal, stating that it was 'not until August 1902 that Frede and I "found" each other' (*SJ2*: 302). Despite their age difference, Montgomery notes that they discovered that their 'souls were the same age' (*SJ2*: 303). On January 25, 1919,

143 However, I will touch upon some of the questions that Robinson (2012) discusses in her essay 'Sex Matters: L.M. Montgomery, Friendship, Sexuality' in chapter 6.

seventeen years after this important relationship had begun, Frede died of the influenza epidemic that raged around the world during the aftermath of the First World War. Despite Frede's early death, she is presented as the love of Montgomery's life in the journals and her presence summons up a truly romantic voice.

Even though the focus of this chapter may seem to be Frede, the actual protagonist's role is still reserved for Montgomery, just as it is throughout the journals. Perhaps not surprisingly, the entries discussing Frede contribute to Montgomery's project of creating autobiographical personas of herself, such as a truly romantic lover or a tragic heroine. It is safe to say that Montgomery's literary narcissism is one of the key features in the entries on Frede, even in the long death entry that depicts Frede's passing. Here too the diary genre affects the narrative means and the picture of the 'I' of the journals: in autobiographical texts in general, but in the diary in particular, the 'I's presence is so crucial that even such blatant narcissism as Montgomery's is understandable and almost obligatory to the genre.

Furthermore, although there is no doubt that Frede was as important to Montgomery as she suggests, I want to emphasise the textual significance of certain friends over others to Montgomery's life-writing project. Frede's role and purpose in the journals is a highly literary one, and as such Montgomery uses her so as to strengthen the overall image she wants the journals to convey. In a sense, Frede is a convenient friend because she died (see also Berg 1994: 39). Thus, Montgomery is granted complete literary freedom with how she is depicted. Frede personifies, among other things, the lost lover, rather like the male protagonist of the second unpublished journal volume, Herman Leard. And as in the entries dealing with Herman, the narrated I is portrayed as a tragic heroine, who loves and then loses her loved one. Again, gothic imagery is used in illustrating the culmination of Montgomery's and Frede's relationship, Frede's passing in 1919. It is in the entries leading to the entry that depicts Frede's death, February 7, 1919, and finally in the death entry itself that Montgomery creates a sincere-sounding romantic discourse, and this discourse in relation to Frede is maintained until the end of the journals, albeit more infrequently.

The main objective here is to demonstrate that nothing in Montgomery's journals is merely about mirroring reality or recording events. Thus, even the extremely genuine-sounding representation of Montgomery's friendship with Frede is part of the overall narrative of the journals, in which female intimacy is implicitly juxtaposed with conventional romance, but it is nevertheless just as fictionalised and artistically assembled as the latter. It is important to remember when reading the Frede entries that Montgomery is an accomplished storyteller and skilled in

winning the readers over. Especially when reading autobiographical texts, it is paramount to analyse how the illusion of truthfulness in the text is accomplished, and why, for instance, the readers sympathise with the narrating I and the narrated I when reading an entry.

What is more, Montgomery enjoys juxtaposing events and characters in her journals, since this makes good dramatic material. A good example of this tendency are the Herman Leard entries discussed in chapter 3, where Montgomery skilfully contrasts the 'right suitor', Herman, with the 'wrong suitor' Edwin Simpson. This strategy is also used with Montgomery's female friends, although in a more complex way. Hence, when studying the entries discussing Frede, and later Montgomery's fan Isabel Anderson in chapter 6, it becomes clear that Montgomery treats these two different women in her life in a similar mode as she treats Herman and Ed. Frede is depicted as the perfect lover, while Isabel is given the role of the *very* bad suitor. Although mostly discussed in separate entries, Frede and Isabel pair up as the angel and the demon in the journals when it comes to female intimacy.[144] Chapters 5 and 6 should thus be considered 'sister chapters' of sorts. Moving from analysing the entries on Frede to discussing Montgomery's female intimacy discourse on a more general level – prompted by the Isabel Anderson entries –, I will examine Montgomery's contrasting expressions of female intimacy during a long span of time.

January 25, 1919 – the day Frede died – is a significant watershed not only in Montgomery's personal life, but also in the structure of the journals. Montgomery rewrote and edited the journals while she was copying them into the legal-sized ledgers starting from 1919, prompted by Frede's death.[145] Thus, the journals as we know them are a re-creation from 1919 onwards by a competent author who was forty-five when she began her major autobiographical task. It is not exaggerated to

144 As Robinson (2012: 168) has noted, sometimes the juxtaposing female roles are also cast with Montgomery herself opposing Isabel, as when Montgomery tries to establish her own love for women as normal heterosexuality contrasted with Isabel's 'unnatural' lesbian cravings.

145 The entry of September 2, 1919, in which Montgomery refers to having begun copying the journals, refers rather vaguely to 'last winter' (*SJ2*: 341), so it is hard to specify whether she actually started the copying in 1918 or 1919. I would argue, however, that it is unlikely that Montgomery would have had time during winter 1918 to commence a task as time-consuming as copying the journals by hand. Between October and December 1918 Montgomery suffered from the Spanish influenza, spent part of November in Park Corner, Prince Edward Island, tending for Frede's family, who were also down with the flu, recovered slowly from its effects, and finished her book *Rainbow Valley* (1919). Moreover, I find it convincing that Frede's passing in January 1919 would have given Montgomery the impetus to go over her journals.

maintain that Montgomery well knew what she was doing when she started editing the journals. Not only did she want to preserve her diaries for future generations, but also to create a life-record, an autobiography of sorts, in order to protect her posthumous reputation.

By 1919 Montgomery was already a world-famous writer. *Anne of Green Gables* had been published eleven years earlier in 1908, and by 1920 it had gone through at least 48 printings. Her subsequent books had also become best-sellers and *Anne* had been translated into several languages.[146] Additionally, Montgomery had recently been involved in a lawsuit, one of many more to come, against her first publisher, L.C. Page, and she perfectly understood what her worth was both publicly and financially, as well as what was at stake if she did not possess a written, legally binding record of her life.[147]

Although Montgomery did not actually write up the account of Frede's death in the journal ledgers until she reached that point in her copying, in 1922,[148] in an artistic sense 1919 works as a point of departure in the journals for Montgomery's unhappy 'after years'. 1919 was the year when Montgomery's husband Ewan Macdonald suffered his first serious mental breakdown – perhaps influenced by Frede's passing, as Rubio (2008: 210) hypothesises in her biography – and when, in short, everything changed for the worse in Montgomery's life. In the journals, 'the most terrible year of my life' (*SJ2*: 364) is used as the point when Montgomery establishes her life story as essentially tragic and herself as its tragic victim. Frede's death is highlighted as the culmination and proof of this tendency – Montgomery states for instance in the June 14, 1924 entry that she has been going through a series of misfortunes and that 'it began with Frede's death' (*SJ3*: 188). However, it is mostly in the long death entry, dated 7 February, 1919, but also well before that, with subtle foreshadowing, that the narrator adopts the tragic stance.

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146 '*Anne of Green Gables* printed in April, but officially published in June; goes through 7 printings between release and December 1908, selling 19,000 copies in first 5 months' (see http://www.lmmrc.ca/chronology_1908-1942.html, March 31, 2015). By 1920 *Anne of Green Gables* had already been translated into Swedish (1909), Dutch (1910), Polish (1912), Norwegian (1918) and Finnish (1920) (see http://www.lmmrc.ca/chronology_1908-1942.html, March 31, 1915).

147 See for example Devereux' (2005) essay on Montgomery's will, which refers directly to the journals as legal documents. Rubio (2008: 220–238) gives a good account of the legal battles against Page in her biography. In fact, Montgomery rushed to Frede's deathbed from Boston where the lawsuit was taking place in January 1919.

148 Montgomery states in her journal entry of February 19, 1922 that 'I have been copying my journal of Frede's death and have lived it over' (UJ5: 239). It is noteworthy that this vital information was omitted from the published journal (*SJ3*: 39).

Elizabeth Epperly (2005: 189) has written about the complicated interplay of images and objects in Montgomery's scrapbooks – which, like the journals, are thoroughly edited by Montgomery – and suggests that they are '[n]either straightforwardly chronological nor fully annotated' but that instead they 'tease and suggest, celebrate and obscure'. The journals feature similar kind of teasing and suggesting by subtle hints, either textual or pictorial or both. Given that all the entries in the journals were copied by Montgomery from 1919 onwards, prompted by Frede's death, her highly sophisticated and elaborate editing choices simply cannot be overlooked.

While rewriting and editing the journal, Montgomery lived over her friendship with Frede and simultaneously re-evaluated and recreated the story of that friendship. For example, the long death entry dated February 7, 1919, but rewritten in 1922, depicts Montgomery – or the narrated I – going over the journals, searching for clues as to Frede's early significance: 'The first mention of her in my diary is in the winter of 1893.... The next mention is not till December 1898, when I speak of having been at Park Corner' (*SJ2*: 302). Montgomery also evaluates her own accounts of Frede in the journal: '"Cade and Frede are away. Only Stella is left." There is a note in this as if I missed Frede, which must have meant that we had been more companionable but if so I have no memory of it' (*SJ2*: 302).[149]

As Montgomery notes in the above, the first mention of Frede in the journals is indeed this rather flimsy note on January 25, 1893 in the first unpublished journal volume: 'When we got to the P.[Park] C.[Corner] school I jumped out and ran in. When the master came to the door I asked for the girls and Clara and Stell and Fred came bouncing out and all grabbed me at once' (*CJ1*: 148).[150] Montgomery still spells Frede's nickname as it is pronounced, but afterwards the spelling is mostly regularised to 'Frede' with an 'e'.

The fact that Frede's nickname is a masculine one cannot pass unnoticed. As with some other female friends of Montgomery – Bertha 'Bertie' McIntyre being the most obvious – Frede's name guides her as a character to the ambivalent realm of

149 In the first few entries Frede figures merely in passing: 'I was over to Park Corner for a fortnight in August and had a pleasant time, as Stella and Fred were both home' (October 8, 1899; *CJ1*: 443); 'Frede has gone down to entertain a beau' (March 2, 1901; *CJ2*: 7).

150 The entries on Frede that were omitted from the first and second volumes of *The Selected Journals* are included in *The Complete Journals* (2012–2013). However, *The Complete Journals* only cover the years between 1889 and 1911. Entries after 1911 are only represented in print in *The Selected Journals* volumes two to five, which have omitted much material. For later entries discussing Frede, the readers must thus mostly rely on *The Selected Journals*, which have many gaps.

gender role play. Throughout the journals Frede is depicted in terms that blend the masculine and the feminine. She is called 'Uncle Fred' by her family: '[I]n our family circle we have always called Fred – and she called herself – "Uncle Fred", as a little joke on her masculine nickname' (*SJ2*: 314). Montgomery endearingly addresses her as 'Freddie-girl', and when Frede finally marries, Montgomery explains her inability to come to terms with the news by stating that 'I have never been able to picture Frede as a wife, living a domestic existence' (*SJ2*: 274).

In 1893 when Frede's name pops up in the journals, Montgomery was nineteen and Frede a school-girl of ten. At this point of her life, Montgomery had more in common with Frede's oldest sister Clara (nicknamed Cade) and she uses similar language in depicting their relationship that she later does with Frede. Due to their significant age-difference, there are only sporadic mentions of Frede up until 1902 when the friendship begins to bloom. From 1902 onwards, Frede's name appears more frequently in the journals, culminating in the most intense years of their friendship between 1912 and 1918, during which the journal might feature anything between seven to seventeen entries mentioning Frede within one year. In terms of statistical frequency, the year 1919 comes up again as the most significant, with thirty-four entries in total that refer to Frede. The last entry in the journals that alludes to her is on June 15, 1939 – fifteen days before Montgomery stops writing in her journal altogether (the last full entry is dated June 30, 1939). Thus, although varied, Frede's presence covers almost the whole span of the journals, even after her death.

The reason why the recurrence of entries about Frede is significant for the analysis of the journals is that they demonstrate Frede's changing role in Montgomery's life story. Evidently, the journals do not reproduce life in any uncomplicated way, but are an artistic construction coined by Montgomery. Thus, although the number of entries mentioning Frede does not convey much about the real-life relationship between the two women, it does demonstrate how the depiction of the relationship artistically changes in the journals. In other words, from 1912 onwards culminating in 1919, the increase in mentions of Frede is a sign of her new role in the journals, mainly as a female lover that Montgomery will lose and then has lost. Although Frede played a significant part in Montgomery's life from 1902 onwards, the journals do not suggest that prior to 1912.[151]

151 An example of the way the journal does not represent reality in a simple way is that Frede's name is not mentioned at all between October 1903 and October 1905, even though Montgomery most likely had encounters with her during these two years. In addition, consider the following entries: in the April 18, 1906 entry Montgomery writes:

Typically of the journals, Montgomery's later account of her relationship with Frede – offered in the long death entry of February 7, 1919 – fills in the gaps in the diary and explains that it was in August 1902 that Frede and Maud really bonded and that they were 'part of one another' from then onwards (*SJ2*: 303). When looking at the journal entries between 1902 and 1912, the entries themselves do not attach any special significance to Frede or her role in Montgomery's life until 1912. We only know from the retrospective entry of February 7, 1919 that the friendship began in August 1902 – there is no mention of this in the journals. The closest entry that exists is the November 30, 1902 one, which simply states: 'Then last night Frede Campbell and her cousin Jim Campbell arrived and Frede and I conferred on sundry subjects very near to our hearts' (*CJ2*: 62). Noteworthy, just above this sentence, the narrating I depicts a similar scene with another intimate friend, Nora Lefurgey: 'Nora was here all Friday night and we talked until the tiny hours' (*CJ2*: 62). At this point in the journal, Frede is simply presented as one female friend among other equally significant ones.

It is a common feature of Montgomery's journals that major events remain unmentioned when they take place. This is normal for diary writing, in which the significance of certain events is accounted for in retrospect, when the journaliser turns her life into a story and goes over her life events giving prominence to some and ignoring others. For Montgomery, such events were for instance the death of her father and her grandmother, her engagement and marriage to Ewan Macdonald, and the writing of *Anne of Green Gables*, all of which are accounted in retrospect, just as Frede's friendship and its significance at the start of their relationship.

In the early entries the close emotional bonds of the relationship between Frede and Montgomery are nevertheless already established. As early as October 20, 1903, Montgomery depicts the first of the many intimate scenes between her and Frede and, one of the most common: the private walk in nature. The narrator depicts a situation after Frede's brother's George's wedding on October 7, 1903: the narrated I tries to get rid of the little life she still has in her 'by going to the woods with Frede in the afternoon where we sat on a damp moss bank for three hours and talked our souls out' (*CJ2*: 86). In this entry, the tone is still fairly unromantic and light if compared to the nature scenes encountered later in the journals, which tallies well with the overall unromantic style of the early journal entries – and the first journal

'We [I and Frede] had two golden days together and they put new grit into me' (*CJ2*: 150). The next mention of Frede is on February 25, 1907, when it is stated: 'I had never seen Frede since the middle of October' (*CJ2*: 169). The reference to October 1906 here is the only clue that the two women met between April 1906 and February 1907, because there is no mention of the meeting in the entries under October 1906.

volumes in general. The surroundings of the intimate 'séance' are unromantic and uncomfortable, 'a damp moss bank', and Montgomery humorously ends the paragraph by depicting the results of such frivolous conduct: 'As a result I had to stay in bed all day Saturday with a bad cold' (*CJ2*: 86).

The importance of nature imagery for Montgomery in substantiating female intimacy in the journals cannot be highlighted enough. Most intimate scenes depicting female intimacy either take place in enclosed spaces, such as bedrooms and parlours, or in nature, such as in the forest and on the shore, as is the case with Montgomery's intimate scenes with Nora Lefurgey (see also McDonald-Rissanen 2008: 36; Gammel 2002b: 116; Gammel 2002a: 293–295).[152] Notably, all of these spaces offer an environment that is outside of society and relatively safe for close female bonding. Contrasted with the unromantic scene discussed above, the female romance begins to draw more heavily on nature imagery as the journals progress. Most intimate scenes between Montgomery and Frede employ nature not only as a backdrop but an active participant, such as in the entry dated July 18, 1915, when the friendship was already well-established.

Subtly foreshadowing Frede's death in 1919, the entry of July 18, 1915 is more melancholic than the one from 1903, and hence, in a true romantic vein, nature reflects the sad tones of the narrating I: 'And through the stillness came the strangest, saddest, most unforgettable sound in nature – the soft, ceaseless wash on a distant shore of the breakers of a spent storm. … It is more mournful than the rain wind of night – the heartbreak of all creation is in it' (*SJ2*: 170). Notably, after setting the natural scene of the entry, the narrator continues by underlining the intimacy of the two women: 'Frede and I walked back and forth over the bridge … speaking lowly of the deepest thoughts in our hearts. We seemed part of the night' (*SJ2*: 170). Moreover, compare the previous sentence with the one in *Emily Climbs* (1925) where it is fictionalised: 'She [Emily] felt as if she and Teddy were all alone in a wonderful new world…. They seemed, themselves, to be part of the faint, cool fragrance of the night' (*EMC*: 54). Typically of the relationship between Montgomery's life-writing and fiction, female intimacy depicted in the journals has turned into the accepted and required form of conventional romance in the novel.

Montgomery also reverses gender roles in her fiction when it comes to romantic scenes found in the journals. For instance, the famous scene in *Anne of Green*

152 See the entry of August 3, 1904: 'Several afternoons we [Nora and Montgomery] spent at the shore, going down with our cameras and lunch baskets, donning bathing suits as soon as we got down and living a sort of amphibious life, wading and diving and snap-shotting' (*CJ2*: 108). Gammel (2002a: 293–295) discusses the photographs Nora and Montgomery took on the shore in her essay 'Mirror Looks'.

Gables in which Gilbert calls Anne 'carrots' with the consequence of Anne hitting him in the head with her slate (*AGG*: 154) is almost the reverse version of a scene in Montgomery's journals. In the early entries of February 17 and 23, 1893, the narrator depicts how the narrated I teases a red-haired boy named Austin by concocting a verse with the title of 'The Boy With the Auburn Hair' and calling him 'Cavendish Carrots' (*CJ1*: 150). The narrator laments that '[Austin] has not yet forgiven me for burlesquing him in that unlucky rhyme and persists in treating me with what he doubtless imagines to be lofty disdain' (*CJ1*: 150). This is in fact exactly how Anne behaves in the novel after Gilbert has teased her.

It is noteworthy that while Montgomery could turn her intimate moments with women into believable scenes of conventional romancing in her novels, she nevertheless hardly ever writes with similar openness and romantic voice about her male romances in the journals, her more private forum. On the contrary, when Montgomery depicts conventional romance in her diary, nature imagery, for instance moonlight, offers possibilities to mock stereotypical romantic scenes. Usually, the narrating I or the narrated I cold-bloodedly snubs the men who fall for the 'nature is romantic' cliché. By contrast, when Montgomery writes on May 26, 1917 of a moonlit night with Frede, the tone is sincere and confidential:

> Last night Frede and I had the most beautiful walk along the river road in the moonlight and talked of a thousand things…. The moonlight danced on the silver river … and somehow Frede and I drew very near to each other in spirit and knew what was in each other's hearts without need of words. (*SJ2*: 220)

However, at this point in the journal – between 1902 and 1912 – Frede is merely depicted as a confidante and a sort of cure for Montgomery, who during the long, lonely years living with her grandmother in Cavendish suffers from melancholia and depression. Frede is not yet referred to in terms of romantic longing, but instead discussed as medicine for depression: 'A talk with Frede Campbell if I could get it would do them [nerves] more good than all the drugs in the world' (*CJ2*: 213; February 16, 1909). Montgomery also parallels Frede with the journal, interestingly objectifying her, by stating that 'between Frede and my journal I continue to muddle along' (*CJ2*: 149; March 6, 1906). Perhaps commonly for a depressed person, the entries between 1903 and 1911 that mention Frede focus on Montgomery's own inner and outer difficulties with blatant narcissism. Although Frede is definitely presented as an indispensable friend – equating her with the journal proves her importance, since the journal was paramount in Montgomery's life –, the focus is on Montgomery, her intense nature and her worries.

The complicated organisation of the journals means that some information on the development of the friendship features much later. Frede and Montgomery shared a habit of writing 'ten year letters' to each other, after the nineteenth-century vogue. Chronologically the letters would belong among the entries of 1907 and 1917, but Montgomery decided to include them in her journal as late as April 5, 1937 (*SJ5*: 150–159). What is so fascinating about these letters is the very fact that they exist, and that one is able to hear Frede's voice in them. Montgomery rarely saved any of her personal correspondence, in order to control her posthumous public image.[153] However, she does copy some letters allegedly verbatim in the journals. The ten year letters contextualise the early years of the friendship and offer details of the women's intimate lives that Montgomery's writing in the journals does not include.

Montgomery copies her letter to Frede (written on March 24, 1907) and Frede's two letters that she received in turn, one from 1907 and one ten years later, from March 24, 1917. Not only is it possible to witness Frede's lively penmanship, but also to analyse the intimate communication of the two female friends. As Vicinus (2004: xix) has noted on the importance of secrecy for women who wrote about mutual desire, Montgomery and Frede alike are concerned about their letters falling into the wrong hands. Montgomery writes in an unpublished entry of February 14, 1928 about reading through Frede's letters that mostly conclude with 'a request to "burn this"' (UJ7: 249–250).[154] Thus, their correspondence was undoubtedly considered confidential and intimate by both women. Especially the picture of the early friendship benefits much from the sincere proximity the letters convey.

The ten year letters talk openly about intimate topics otherwise not covered in the journals, such as Montgomery's courtship with Ewan Macdonald, Frede's love affairs and boyfriends, and the warm relationship between the two women.

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153 Visiting Prince Edward Island in 1936, Montgomery was not happy when she discovered that her late childhood friend Pensie Macneill had preserved the letters Montgomery wrote to her when they were teenagers. She writes: 'I must say I don't like the idea of Chester Bulman [Pensie's son] showing such a thing [the letters] to strangers' (*SJ5*: 106). Montgomery continues in a subsequent entry: 'I wish they [the letters] were burned. Heaven knows into whose hands they may fall' (*SJ5*: 106). This example shows how conscious Montgomery was of her fame, especially in her later years, and how much she tried to exert control over her various autobiographical texts. Montgomery's letters to Pensie are now kept in the archives of the University of Prince Edward Island and they are among the only early letters by Montgomery that have survived.

154 'She [Frede] did not want any risk run of her letters being seen. Living as she did in nosey boarding houses she was in constant alarm lest her letters be read and get her in trouble' (UJ7: 249–250). See also a quote from *A Tangled Web* (1931: 73), in which Aunt Betty reminisces about a relative: 'I loved Annabel. She was the only one of the Lesley clan I really loved. … The only woman I ever knew who would keep secrets … [and] would really burn a letter if you asked her to'. See also Epperly (1992: 243).

Montgomery's letter was probably edited when she copied it in the journal, because of her tendency not to reveal too much of her private side even in her personal life-writing.[155] The letter does sound fairly composed and writerly, at least when compared to Frede's more spontaneous style. Most definitely, Montgomery's letter is not overwhelmingly intimate, and she even confesses in the beginning of the letter that she is 'too old, too wise, too lonely and moody … to write it [the letter] as it should be written' (*SJ5*: 151). Montgomery signs her letter very formally, with 'Yours just as truly and lovingly and good-comradely … Lucy Maud Montgomery' (*SJ5*: 154).

Frede's letter from 1907, in comparison, is charmingly intimate. Signing it 'Lovingly Frede' (*SJ5*: 156), she writes unreservedly about her love affairs, heartbreaks and loneliness. She encourages Montgomery to openly wear '*that diamond*' (*SJ5*: 155; emphasis original) and confesses: 'How I envied Ewan Macdonald for winning you. I wanted you to be alone like myself' (*SJ5*: 155).[156] Although encouraging Montgomery to enjoy her engagement, and perhaps her newly acquired higher status in the society, the above-quoted part of Frede's letter reads as a love letter from a jealous lover. Notably, it is Ewan that Frede envies for winning Montgomery over, not Montgomery for securing a husband, and the threnody-like anxiety of losing her closest female friend to matrimony is evident.

Frede continues, however, on a more benevolent note: 'I'm sorry now for feeling so stingy, because you are just the same as you were when we last slept together on Friday night, Mar. 22, 1907' (*SJ5*: 155).[157] Interestingly enough, the letter sways back and forth between Frede's distress over Montgomery's new status and how it will change their relationship and the intimate voice that persists despite these changes. Although it was not uncommon for women to share a bed in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the fact that Frede draws on a shared scene – both emotionally and physically intimate – when addressing her friend's engagement emphasises the sensuous tone of the letter.

155 The notes to *The Selected Journals* 4 offer an example of a letter that Montgomery copied in her journal on February 26, 1932. An original of this letter has survived in the Campbell family, so comparing the actual letter to Montgomery's copied version is possible. According to the notes, 'there are a few differences between the original letter and LMM's journal transcription of that letter. She changes the occasional word, removes some small redundancies, sharpens a few points, and deletes several paragraphs' (*SJ4*: 398).

156 In 1907 Montgomery was already secretly engaged to Ewan Macdonald, see chapter 4.

157 The oddly precise date – Frede is referring to a day two days prior to the date of the letter – was probably added later by Montgomery when she copied the letter into the journal.

On a more practical note, Frede finishes discussing the engagement by bluntly stating: 'Besides, if he [Ewan] hadn't won you I'd have no place to spend a part of my vacation' (*SJ5*: 155). While regarding the complexities and practicalities in the life of an unmarried woman, Frede also takes for granted that her relationship with Montgomery will continue even after Montgomery's marriage and that their mutual intimacy will not be threatened by it. It is noteworthy that by 1937 Montgomery did not see the need to censor this confidential letter of Frede's, but inserted it in the journal as it is. Even after her 'lesbian' scare with Isabel Anderson (see chapter 6), Montgomery considered it possible and necessary to include Frede's loving voice in the journals.

Frede's second letter from 1917 presents a more mature voice, but remains as intimate as the first one. Frede expresses her gratitude over that 'the worst of all has not happened.... We still have each other and we have not in any way grown apart' (*SJ5*: 157). She writes about Montgomery's children, hints at her own engagement and ends the letter with a poem that reads, 'For the friendship of true women, Lord, That hath been and ever shall be ...Take you my thanks today' (*SJ5*: 158). As Frede is a very descriptive and personal letter-writer, the inclusion of her letters in Montgomery's journals implies everything Montgomery does not write about. In one short paragraph, Frede manages to paint a vivid picture of the house where Montgomery grew up and where their mutual grandparents lived:

> I drank currant wine and ate spy apples. I tiptoed into the spare room to admire the Chinese fish. I coveted the sailor clock and the glass with the big spider inside. I watched grandma sort the mails. I followed her out to the old well and watched the buckets go down among the ferns. I admired a certain bronze turkey. (*SJ5*: 158)

Little details such as these make one wish for a more polyphonic representation of the relationship, since Montgomery's depiction of Frede and even her own life clearly leaves out so much.

There are also two postcards from Frede inserted between the handwritten journal ledgers.[158] Whether they are in their original places in the journals is unclear since they are not glued on to the page, but slipped between the pages. Any written material by Frede is rare, hence these postcards add to the picture significantly.

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158 See also Cavert's (2003) article on Frede that mentions the postcards, and Gammel's (2008: 246) *Looking for Anne*. One of the postcards is reproduced in *The Selected Journals* (*SJ5*: 52).

They are from around 1910 and 1913, but inserted between the two final handwritten journal volumes (1933–1936, 1936–1942) and after the entry of December 31, 1935 and November 15, 1938, thus between the time when Montgomery copied the ten-year letters into her diary (1937). The postcards reassert the close intimacy of the women, not only in Montgomery's edited life-writing, but also in these more instantaneous and authentic documents.

Frede writes on the first postcard: 'I dwell in "Macdonald" Halls. But the sweetest thought is "that you love me still the same["], F.[Frederica] E.[Elmestine] C.[Campbell]' (Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library). The postcard is addressed to 'Miss L.M. Montgomery, 67 Powell St., Brookline, Mass.', which helps to date the postcard. Montgomery is still unmarried as she is referred to as 'Miss' (she married Ewan Macdonald in 1911), and the postcard is probably from the time when she was visiting her publisher L.C. Page in Boston, in November 1910.[159] In Cavert's (2003: 7) opinion, Frede addresses her jealousy over her sister in this card, as Montgomery had taken Frede's older sister Stella to accompany her on the trip to Boston, but it could also be interpreted as referring to Montgomery's engagement to Ewan.

The text of the postcard is fascinating, because Frede alludes to a popular nineteenth-century aria 'I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls' from the opera *The Bohemian Girl* (see also Epperly 1992: 24 and Wilmhurst 1989: 17), but changes the lyrics slightly in order to refer to Montgomery's then-fiancé Ewan Macdonald by a clever pun: Frede dwells in Macdonald Halls (in Montreal where she is teaching) instead of 'Marble Halls'.[160] The message of the postcard, despite its humorous tone, is nevertheless genuine. As in the ten-year letter, Frede refers to the inevitable change in Montgomery's life – her marriage – and its possible implications to their relationship, but as if assuring not only herself but also Montgomery, she is convinced that their mutual love will survive.

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159 Cavert (2003: 7) confirms this as she writes that '[Frede] sent a postcard from Montreal to Maud in Boston'.

160 The lyrics in their entirety go: 'I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls / With vassals and serfs at my side. / And of all who assembled within those walls / That I was the hope and the pride. // I had riches too great to count, could boast / Of a high ancestral name / But I also dreamt, which pleased me most / That you lov'd me still the same, / That you lov'd me, you lov'd me still the same, / That you lov'd me, You loved me still the same. // I dreamt that suitors sought my hand. / That knights upon bended knee, / And with vows no maiden's heart could withstand, / They pledg'd their faith to me // And I dreamt that one of that noble host / Came forth my hand to claim. / But I also dreamt, which charmed me most / That you lov'd me still the same, / That you lov'd me, you lov'd me still the same, / That you lov'd me, you loved me still the same' (Alfred Bunn, *The Bohemian Girl*; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Dreamt_I_Dwelt_in_Marble_Halls, February 22, 2013).

The second postcard is less poetic in its contents, but equally romantic. It is from the time when Montgomery was already married to Ewan and living in Leaskdale, and it is sent from Red Deer, Alberta, where Frede was teaching in 1913 (see e.g. Rubio 2008: 175).[161] The inevitable change has happened in the two women's relationship, but Frede asserts their mutual loving bond by sending a Valentine's Day postcard and writing: 'Dear M. Here are my 14th sentiments for you. Was so glad of your letter and hope to answer soon. Love to all. As. Ever. Frede' (Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library). The '14th sentiments' refer to a poem on the picture side of the postcard called 'A Reverie', which ends in the lines 'But through all the changes that time had wrought / Was one face, with unaltered friendship fraught, / For the sea I was on was the Sea of Thought, / And the friend of my dream was you'.

Although Frede sends her love to 'all', in other words Ewan and Chester, Montgomery's eldest son, the postcard repeats the powerful romantic undertone of the first one, especially by referring to the main day of romance in the North American cultural tradition – Valentine's Day – and to a romantic poem. Hence, it is possible to observe that both women treated their relationship as romantic love and represented it as thus in their mutual correspondence.

5.2 TOUCHES OF ROMANCE

In 1912, when Montgomery's first son Chester is born, Frede's literary significance in the journals grows. Not only does Montgomery start painting a picture of their friendship in a warm and sensuous style that is new to the journals, but she also shifts the focus slightly and provides the reader with more details of Frede's life. Perhaps as a subtle foreshadowing of Frede's death – after all, everything in the journals was written after 1919 – Montgomery starts creating an image of Frede as an unhappy soul with a tragic fate, equalling her own destiny with Frede's, as sort of twin creatures. The twin imagery surfaces especially in the entries leading up to Frede's death, between 1915 and 1919. The idea of a *Doppelgänger* is common in romantic and gothic literature, hence it works well in Montgomery's gothic representation of Frede's death, discussed in the next subchapter. Although Montgomery seems to be writing of Frede, she manages to paint a more vivid picture of herself as the central focaliser and constructs the tragic image of the narrated I through Frede's character, as in this example: 'I looked back as we hastened to our train and saw her [Frede] standing, a lonely figure.... It made me feel very lonely, too' (*SJ2*: 166–167).

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161 The postcard is addressed to 'Mrs. Ewen [sic] Macdonald, Leaskdale, Ontario' (Archival and Special Collections, University of Guelph Library).

Furthermore, the entries under 1912 are important because they begin a new phase in the journals as regards female intimacy. As Robinson (2004: 20) indicates in her article 'Bosom Friends. Lesbian Desire in L.M. Montgomery's Anne Books', Montgomery writes more comfortably about female interaction than of heterosexual romancing, and she creates homoerotic scenes that challenge the expected compulsory heterosexuality by several characters in the *Anne* books – such as Diana Barry, Anne's best friend, and Katherine Brooke, the headmaster of Anne's school in *Anne of Windy Poplars* (1936). Marah Gubar (2001: 48) has also discussed Montgomery's tactics of postponing the culmination of the conventional romance plot and in her opinion 'these lengthy delays make room for passionate relationships between women that prove far more romantic than traditional marriages'.

In her essay Robinson (2004: 24) analyses in more detail the relationship between Anne and Leslie Moore in *Anne's House of Dreams* (1917), drawing the apt conclusion that Anne's emotional and erotic bonds with Leslie are represented as the essence of the book, not Anne's relationship with her newlywed husband, Gilbert. I would suggest that this fictional female relationship draws to a high degree on the relationship of Montgomery and Frede, especially as depicted in the journal entries of 1912. Undoubtedly, the themes in both Montgomery's fiction and life-writing coincide and merge (see also Simons 1990: 68, 149), and corroborate Vicinus's (2004: xxxii) claim that 'creative work can reveal passions impossible to articulate in letters or journals'. *Anne's House of Dreams* is also one of the few examples in which female intimacy depicted in Montgomery's life-writing is transported into fiction without having been changed into the conventional type of romance. In fact, as Gubar (2001: 62) suggests, in the novel Montgomery openly connects marriage with loss of life through the story of Leslie's unhappy marriage to Dick Moore.

As already mentioned in relation to Montgomery's male romances, the journals employ what I term *fictionalisation* when depicting romantic encounters. In the case of *Anne's House of Dreams* and the portrayal of Montgomery's relationship with Frede, it would seem that here the tables at least in part are turned. Montgomery provides many references to Frede and their mutual intimacy during 1912, when Frede stayed with the Macdonalds to help Montgomery with her firstborn, but the scenes are not fictionalised or artistically elaborate. Rather the style, if warm and intimate, is matter of fact, as in 'Frede and I work together in beautiful concord' (*SJ2*: 108). However, the elaboration later surfaces in the novel, which came out in 1917 and which Montgomery wrote during 1916 in a very short time, amid the stress of the First World War: 'Today [October 5, 1916] I finished "Anne's House of Dreams". I never wrote a book in so short a time and amid so much strain of mind

and body' (*SJ2*: 193). Even so, Montgomery weaves real feeling into the book and depicts mature female bonding for the first time in her fiction. As Robinson (2004: 24) writes, 'Leslie Moore, above everyone else, is the object of Anne's desire'.

What are the similarities, then, between the fictional relationship of Anne and Leslie, and the close-to-fictional relationship of Montgomery and Frede as depicted in the journals? First, as Robinson (2004: 24) notes, Leslie is not described as representing the traditional domestic femininity, much like Frede. For example, the sentence 'there seemed nothing of the wife about her [Leslie]' (*AHD*: 88; see also Robinson 2004: 24) echoes the way Montgomery is unable to picture Frede as a wife (*SJ2*: 274). Moreover, Robinson (2004: 25) points out that the scene in which Leslie and Anne admire Anne's firstborn is very erotically evocative. Eroticism aside, the scene seems to directly reproduce Montgomery and Frede's adoration over Montgomery's son Chester. In the journal, dated October 7, 1912, the scene reads: 'Frede and I have such fun in the mornings when I bathe and dress him [Chester] in the kitchen while she [Frede] is washing the breakfast dishes. We talk the most delicious nonsense to him' (*SJ2*: 110), whereas in the novel Leslie's and Anne's admiration over Anne's baby has turned into 'shameless orgies of lovemaking and ecstasies of adoration' (*AHD*: 271).

It seems likely that Montgomery, whether consciously or unconsciously, was inspired by her intimate experiences with Frede when writing *Anne's House of Dreams*. Like the novel, in which Gilbert's feelings and reactions to the birth of his first son are not part of the narrative, the journals completely evade Montgomery's husband's experience of fatherhood and instead present the joint motherhood of two women, who act as partners and take over the domestic scene, but also enjoy each other's company and share intimacies that are not conceivable with men. Depicting coming home after a horse carriage ride with Ewan, the narrating I states: 'We had a … delightful home-coming, with Frede and Sonny Punch [Chester], a bright fire and a good supper awaiting us' (*SJ2*: 109). Paying attention only to Frede and Chester waiting at home – Ewan is hardly mentioned in this entry – Montgomery places Frede in the position of the wife waiting at home with the baby. Much of the '"home" feeling' (*SJ2*: 109) Montgomery attributes to her first home as a married woman in Leaskdale is thus related to Frede, who seems more of a spouse in the journals than Montgomery's often elusive husband does.

After Frede has left Leaskdale in 1912, Montgomery writes the first journal entry that is dedicated solely to her. The December 16, 1912 entry begins: 'I feel sad – lonely – sick at heart tonight. Frede went away this morning' (*SJ2*: 115), and thus introduces a shift in style in the journals towards the highly romantic language

and longing that is so prominent in the later entries. Montgomery, copying this entry in the journal ledgers after 1919, includes a photo of Frede – 'in her room at Leaskdale manse' (UJ3: 328) – next to the text as if to underline the importance of their connection.[162] She also adopts a more dramatic style that contrasts with the previous entries and probably echoes Montgomery's feelings after Frede's passing: 'It seems just now as if I *couldn't* live without Frede. … But oh, I miss her – I miss her! … A pang goes through my heart as I pass the door – and glance into the empty darkness' (*SJ2*: 115; emphasis original).

By the style change and the first out of many cries of loneliness and yearning, Montgomery signals a repositioning of Frede's importance to her own life story in the journals. As noted, Frede works as a twin other, on whom the narrating I mirrors the narrated I, but also as an absent lover whom the narrator longs for. The new style of writing reaches its full apex especially in the entries foreshadowing and following Frede's death in 1919. The entry of February 7, 1919, which depicts Frede's passing, takes up over eighteen pages in the published journal. Thus, it is not surprising that Montgomery lays the foundations for this significant entry already much earlier in the journals, also on the level of style, which begins to have highly romantic notes to it.

Foreshadowing what is to come is one of Montgomery's main artistic signposts, as already discussed in regard to the equally long and important entry about the Herman Leard affair. Since Montgomery copied the entries of 1918 and 1919 about Frede during 1922 and 1923 well knowing the eventual outcome of their friendship, it would be odd if this knowledge and the retrospective gaze would not have affected her writing up of these entries. In fact, she writes in an entry dated January 27, 1922:

> In my task of copying my journals into uniform volumes I have reached the summer of 1918. Today a line, written blithely then, gave me a stab of bitter pain. Speaking of Frede I said, "She goes soon to P.E. Island and we are hoping for one more happy vacation in the dear old spot." We had it – it "was our blithest and our last." (*SJ3*: 37)

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162 There is also a photo of Montgomery's maid Lily Reid above Frede's photo in the third handwritten journal ledger (1910–1916), because the text mentions how she started working at the Macdonalds'. The several maids that worked at the Macdonald household also provided Montgomery with varying types of female intimacy, the maid often working closely with her in the house. However, the difference between the maids and Montgomery's female friends was social class. Montgomery often highlights this in the journals, always noting how the maids came from a different class than her, thus eliminating any chance of 'real' intimacy (see e.g. *SJ5*: 314–325).

Furthermore, four years prior to the long death entry in the chronology of the journals, in an entry dated January 1, 1915, Montgomery writes of watching Frede leave after she has spent Christmas with the Macdonalds and she ends the entry in a prophetic question: 'Under what circumstances shall we meet again?' (*SJ2*: 161).[163] It is most likely that Montgomery added this final sentence later during the copying process, since soon after this entry, another one of April 11, 1915, depicts Frede's first, non-fatal illness of typhoid and how Montgomery rushes to her aid in the hospital in Montreal.

The April 11, 1915 entry is much like the long death entry of February 7, 1919. In both Montgomery depicts her reactions to Frede's illness and her own role in first saving her and then watching her die. Both of these entries use literary references and dramatisation, which is a typical feature in the journals when a major event is outlined. In addition, not uncommonly to the journals, both of these entries were written in retrospect. According to Montgomery's journals, Frede's first illness took place around March 20, 1915, while her death occurred on January 25, 1919, which places the two entries depicting the incidents a few weeks apart from the actual events. Of course, neither of the entries was actually written up in the journal ledgers until much later.

The April 11, 1915 entry begins with a quote from Montgomery's fiction, *Anne of the Island* (1915): 'She tasted the poignant sweetness of life when some great dread has been removed from it' (*SJ2*: 163, *AI*: 238).[164] Already in the first sentence, Montgomery establishes the focus of the entry on herself, not on Frede, and adds dramatic significance to the journal entry by referring to her own book and an emotional scene in it, mainly by paralleling a fictional and non-fictional account. Notably, in the fictional version of the sickbed scare, Anne hears of Gilbert being fatally ill and realises in an instant that she is in love with him. Conventional romance is once again worked into Montgomery's fiction, while a comparable scene in the journals depicts female intimacy.

Similarly to the two suitors entries discussed earlier, both the entry of April 11, 1915 and February 7, 1919 employ gothic imagery and style, which are Montgomery's

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163 This entry is referred to in the April 11, 1915 entry: 'When I had watched her drive out of the manse gate at New Year's I had had a dreary presentiment that our next meeting would not be a happy one, and I had wondered when and where it would be. The question was answered' (*SJ2*: 164).

164 The book was still unpublished in April, 1915 and Montgomery refers to it as her 'new book' (*SJ2*: 163). The complete sentence in *Anne of the Island* reads: 'Long after Pacifique's gay whistle had faded into the phantom of music and then into silence far up under the maples of Lover's Lane Anne stood under the willows, tasting the poignant sweetness of life when some great dread has been removed from it' (*AI*: 238).

trademarks when elevating the dramatic significance of an entry. Depicting Frede's first illness on April 11, 1915, the narrating I describes the narrated I almost identically as in the entry of June 30, 1897 that illustrates the beginnings of the two suitors story: 'With clenched hands I strode up and down the room wrestling with my agony' (*SJ2*: 163). Likewise, the sentence in the June 30, 1897 entry reads: 'Sometimes I drop my pen and walk wildly up and down my room with clenched hands' (*CJ1*: 377). Repetition of this kind demonstrates the staged quality of Montgomery's writing at times and her tendency to repeat certain clichéd expressions.

However, there is nothing staged about Montgomery's concern over losing her closest female companion in the April 11, 1915 entry: '*Frede dying*! Frede, my more than sister, the woman who was nearest and dearest to me in the world!' (*SJ2*: 163; emphasis original)[165] While in the two suitors entries the gothic style is applied to portray anxiety over an unhappy engagement and a slightly artificial narrative about the right and the wrong suitors, in the April 11, 1915 entry similar imagery is followed by a sincere-sounding cry for a loved one. It is noteworthy that Montgomery begins the romantic discourse on her relationship with Frede when there is a threat of losing that relationship. It is when experiencing this fear of loss that she names Frede her 'more than sister', as if to highlight Frede's dramatic importance in the journals. At this point in the diary, Frede's literary role shifts from a friend to a lover.

Indeed, it is a lover's voice that is heard in the April 11, 1915 entry when the narrator depicts Frede speaking on her sickbed. Similarly as in the February 7, 1919 entry, and throughout the journals, Montgomery uses plenty of dialogue to dramatise events. While in the death entry Frede's last words are recorded with precision, in the April 11, 1915 entry only one utterance suffices from her: '"Maud!" she said, in a tone which she might have used had she seen an angel from heaven' (*SJ2*: 164). Appropriately enough, Frede is described crying out Montgomery's name, which the narrator highlights by the sentence following the line. The narrated I, or Montgomery, is veritably portrayed as an angel from heaven, who has the power to bring her lover back from 'the valley of Shadow' (*SJ2*: 164). To further underline the unearthly tie between the two women, the narrated I hears a voice in her head, uttering words from the Bible – '"Strength and honor are her clothing and she shall rejoice in days to come"' (*SJ2*: 164; Proverbs 31:25) – and a nurse is quoted saying

165 Note the past tense that Montgomery employs throughout this entry as the events are depicted in retrospect. Robinson (2012: 171) also notes how Montgomery's sentence 'Frede, my more than sister' recollects the phrase in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), in which Victor Frankenstein addresses his adoptive sister thus, who later becomes his wife.

that '"It is a strange thing, Mrs. Macdonald, but from the moment you came to this hospital Miss Campbell began to improve"' (*SJ2*: 164).

The depiction of Frede's sudden marriage in 1917 and Montgomery's subsequent discussion of the wedding further corroborate the view that the relationship between the two women equals romance rather than mere friendship. These entries succeed in establishing Frede – and Montgomery herself as Frede's twin other – as somehow different from other women. Montgomery writes on May 24, 1917: 'On Tuesday I got the shock of my life. A letter from Frede Campbell informed me that she had been married the preceding Wednesday' (*SJ2*: 216). The references to Frede's marriage and her new status as a married woman are revealing not only because they demonstrate Montgomery's ability to bend the truth in her life-writing, but also because they showcase similar anxiety on Montgomery's part as Frede's ten-year letters reveal.

Firstly, Montgomery seems to be genuinely shocked by the news, undoubtedly because Frede has made a decision without consulting her, but also because she simply cannot picture Frede married and fears a change in their relationship: 'Something about it seems to hurt me terribly – the element of change and doubt that enters into it all I suppose' (*SJ2*: 217). So disturbed is Montgomery by not having been present at Frede's wedding that when she writes a letter dated February 26, 1919 to her long-time pen-friend George MacMillan depicting Frede's death and the events leading to it, the letter fixes this flaw in history: 'I was with her [Frede] when she was married' (*My Dear Mr. M*: 96).[166] Not foreseeing that her letters to MacMillan would ever be published, Montgomery feels comfortable enough to bend the truth to present her and Frede's relationship without failings to her pen-friend.

Secondly, by depicting Frede's wedding and her own doubts about the marriage, Montgomery employs a jumbled discourse not only to display her uncertainties and anxieties with the change in their relationship but also to validate their mutual bond as stronger than marriage. Ever-present even in this entry – May 24, 1917 – is the familiar way of presenting Frede as a tragic character. This characterisation takes on almost mythical proportions in the journals and is only outdone by the tragedy of Montgomery's own life: 'I have always had a nasty feeling that Frede was not *meant* for happiness – that her nature was and her life must be, essentially tragic' (*SJ2*: 217; emphasis original). Following this statement, in the entries of May 26, 1917 and November 11, 1918, Montgomery not only undermines the bond between Frede and her husband – 'I do *not* think that Frede loves him [Cameron MacFarlane] in

166 I am grateful for Mary Rubio for pointing this out to me (see also Rubio 2008: 203).

any real sense of the word' (*SJ2*: 218; emphasis original) –, but she also analyses at length all the reasons why Frede should not have married.

Trying to picture Frede as a wife, the narrating I's imagination meets 'a blank wall' and she cannot get rid of 'the odd, haunting feeling that Frede is not for calm domestic joys and tame house-mothering' (*SJ2*: 274).[167] This is the most explicit point in the journals where Montgomery endeavours to name the unnameable when discussing Frede. Her inability to imagine her dear friend within the expectations of conventional romance underlines her role as Montgomery's true love in the journals. Moreover, when considering the main metaphor Montgomery employs, it is hard not to attach any sexual significance to the way Frede is characterised. Borrowed from Kipling's story 'The Cat that Walked by Himself', Frede is depicted as the cat that walks by herself, and 'waves her wild tail and walks by her wild lone' (*SJ2*: 274).[168] In a frustrated outburst, Montgomery portrays her inability to witness Frede as 'Cam MacFarlane's [Frede's husband] housekeeper and sock-mender', stating simply that 'it is not the essence of her [Frede]' (*SJ2*: 274).

Montgomery continues the downgrading of Frede's husband later in the journals, even after Frede's death. She depicts Cameron MacFarlane's visit in the April 23, 1919 entry without hiding her discontent with him (*SJ2*: 316–318).[169] The jealous and possessive tones over Frede are really striking in this entry, even if Montgomery's dislike of Frede's husband were grounded in fact. The narrator exclaims, for instance: 'I knew that death had been a friend to Frede – had undone the mistake of her marriage to this crude, conceited, ill-bred boy.... Frede, my darling, I would rather you were dead than unhappy even though it means my lifelong loneliness' (*SJ2*: 318). The narrator goes on to establish the image that Frede regretted her marriage before her death, but more than anything the entry of April 23, 1919 speaks of Montgomery's regret over Frede getting married in the

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167 The statement strikes me as odd considering that Montgomery has previously depicted Frede as helping her take care of Chester. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Frede had a degree in home economics and was teaching the subject when she died.

168 The last sentence of Kipling's story is: 'Then he goes out to the Wet Wild Woods or up the Wet Wild Trees or on the Wet Wild Roofs, waving his wild tail and walking by his wild lone' (see: http://www.boop.org/jan/justso/cat.htm, April 7, 2015). Notably, in Kipling's story, the cat is contrasted with domesticity and depicted living at the border of home and nature.

169 Interestingly enough, once again it seems that Montgomery bent the truth in her journals. She writes that Cameron humiliates her during a social call, but refrains from scolding him: 'I was not going to quarrel with Frede's husband. I said nothing' (*SJ2*: 317). However, in the editing copies of *The Selected Journals* most likely Mary Rubio has written a note next to this entry stating that 'Lily [Meyers, Montgomery's maid] remembered at the age of 94 that LMM gave Cam a dreadful dressing down back at the house' (EC: 12).

first place. Worse than dying is Frede's mistake in having confided in and relied on anyone else than Montgomery: 'Cam left yesterday. … Somehow I resent his having any share in Frede when he was so unworthy of her' (*SJ2*: 318).

Looking at the entries of summer 1918 – the last 'happy summer' before Frede died – and November 1918, one can note that Montgomery vigorously foreshadows the long entry of February 7, 1919, but also the romantic discourse that becomes so dominant in and after 1919. It is in these entries that she finally establishes the romantic relevance of her relationship with Frede. Familiar elements are once again present: nature imagery as the background for intimate moments, longing for Frede when they have to part and indicating the special bond between the two. The entries that depict Frede and Montgomery's last moments together are very sensual and employ the pronoun 'we' in a significant way: 'We sat alone and talked until midnight – and we were strangely, perfectly, weirdly happy' (*SJ2*: 274). Why Montgomery feels the need to apply so many adverbs when depicting their intimate moment becomes clear when one considers the following sentence: 'It will be a jolt to wake up tomorrow morning and find ourselves middle-aged women with husbands and endless responsibilities!' (*SJ2*: 274). She simply cannot include husbands in this moment with Frede, which is almost beyond words, in the realms of the strange and the weird (even *queer*), but also of perfection.

Eventually, in the January 1919 entries, the foreshadowing of Frede's death becomes so prominent that it is hard to ignore. Montgomery includes mentions of Frede in almost every entry leading up to the February 7, 1919 one, even when the entries seemingly do not have any connection to Frede. It is most likely that she added most of these when copying and rewriting the entries in the journal ledgers in 1922 after Frede's death. For instance, at the end of the entry of January 3, 1919, Montgomery adds a paragraph with a story of Frede telling her of a deceitful friend and exclaiming 'passionately': 'Maud, upon my word there's *nobody* true – except *you*. You are the only person I've ever found whom I could trust absolutely' (*SJ2*: 280; emphases original). Yet again confirming her special link with Frede, Montgomery includes these little hints along the way for the readers to encounter.[170]

This tendency becomes most prominent in the January 4, 1919 entry in which Montgomery tellingly already writes about Frede in the past tense and proceeds from a description of an evening spent at home – 'We generally sit in the parlor.

170 These confirming statements come across also in the December 1 and the December 27, 1918 entries: 'I miss Frede so much – more than ever this time. In Frede I find both emotional and intellectual companionship' (*SJ2*: 276); 'I'm hungry to see her [Frede] again, even if it isn't so very long since I saw her in Park Corner' (UJ4: 282; emphasis original).

… Frede always called it "a summer room"' (*SJ2*: 281) – to an anecdote about her and Frede's cats. A similar technique of using storytelling to foreshadow Frede's passing is used as early as July 30, 1918, when Montgomery depicts the Campbells and herself sitting down to eat supper at Park Corner, when they notice that they are thirteen at the table. The narrated I is quick to note that it is Frede who sat down last – '"your doom is sealed"' (*SJ2*: 259) – and while not more is written about this event until the death entry, Montgomery ends the entry in an ominous remark: 'I wonder if the spirits of the departed ever eat spirit-beef-ham' (*SJ2*: 259), after having depicted her and Frede's love of beef ham.[171]

5.3 THE DEATH ENTRY AND BEYOND

Finally, then, it is safe to say that the long death entry of February 7, 1919 is not a spontaneous entry by any means, despite its emotional subject matter. It is instead a perfect example of the artistic construction of Montgomery's storytelling in the journals with its chronological narrative assembled in 1922, three years after Frede's death. The main points I want to make when analysing this entry are that first, as so often in the journals, the narrated I is portrayed as a tragic heroine in keeping with romantic conventions. However, contrasted to the two suitors entries, which work as the main counterpart for this entry, the tragic heroine is now portrayed in relation to a female lover, who is adored and glorified but ultimately lost. Second, like the two suitors entries, the death entry is composed of two contrasting styles, in which passionate gothic imagery is blended with a more detached linear narrative. And third, while Frede paradoxically is not the main character in this entry, it is noteworthy that nonetheless, when she is depicted, it is in an erotic and sensual style and language. Thus, the entry firmly establishes the intimate bonds of Montgomery and Frede and functions as a declaration of female love in the journals.

The entry begins with a matter-of-fact statement: 'On Saturday, January 25th, at seven o'clock in the morning Frederica Campbell MacFarlane died of flu-pneumonia in the infirmary of Macdonald College at St. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec' (*SJ2*: 287). The double-layered style of the entry is constituted already in the beginning, since after this declaration follows a line drawn by pen, marking a break in the text (and supposedly in writing) and under it a more emotional outburst: 'There, it is written! … It is true! And my heart is broken! Oh, how can I go on living?' (*SJ2*: 287).[172] This

171 In the death entry of February 7, 1919 Montgomery refers to the event thus: 'Three who sat at that table of thirteen are gone. Is the tale fulfilled?' (*SJ2*: 299), giving it the air of a ghost story, which strengthens the general gothic tone of this entry.

172 Breaking the flow of text with a drawn line is a common feature in the handwritten journals.

kind of alternating between the composed narrative and the demonstrative remarks removed from it continues throughout the whole entry. It is as if Montgomery utilised a double narration, pasting two different but interrelated narrative voices together, with separate narrators, one omniscient and detached, the other subjective and involved.

In a sense, the handwritten journals do not contain any 'personal' or emotional material, since Montgomery perceived her journals very much as public documents. The main function of the journals, as copied in the ledgers, is to establish Montgomery as a famous author and maintain her reputation as such. Thus, it is not surprising that even within an entry that depicts the death of her most important female friend, Montgomery pauses the narrative to give details of her legal issues with her publisher and their impact on her career. In contrast, the emotional voice is then used to demonstrate genuine feeling and, more importantly, to add substance of authorial presence in the entry while at the same time creating an illusion of the writing taking place, as in this example: 'I take up my pen again, after a wild outbreak of tears' (*SJ2*: 292). However, since one cannot tell whether this 'outbreak' took place on February 7, 1919, in 1922 or even later, its significance is largely literary and added in order to evoke sympathy in the readers.

It cannot be underlined enough that the entry of Feburary 7, 1919 is an artistic reworking of events that actually took place but are turned into fiction with its own logic. Although Montgomery coolly proceeds to give the details of the events leading to Frede's death and its aftermath, building suspense gradually – starting the story 'from the beginning' by giving the details of her Boston law-suit, from where she was called upon to Montreal to Frede's hospital bed –, it is evident that her authorial penmanship reworks symbolic meaning into the events when she writes and edits the entry. Right at the beginning of the text, the main gothic symbols such as premonition dreams are woven into the narrative, highlighted, yet again, by quotations from the Bible, as in the parallel entry of April 15, 1915.

The gothic elements in the death entry are partly familiar from the two suitors entries, such as the tormented heroine and romantic vocabulary, but they are taken even further and strengthened by new imagery that makes the entry read as a veritable ghost story. The reason Montgomery adopts this type of style is in part because it fits the subject matter so well – what better style to highlight the horror of losing one's loved one to death? But it is also because she is familiar with it, having already worked gothic narrative into her journal previously. This time, in addition to the gothic-romantic elements of the narrative, Montgomery draws from her life-long passion for ghost stories and blends the tale of Frede's passing with ghosts and

spirits, doubles and twins, premonitions and dreams.[173] Notably, the main symbols of the entry are gates, corridors and stairs, claustrophobic liminal spaces that work as portals between this world and the afterlife.

For example, in order to add symbolic significance to Montgomery's visit to Boston, from where she is called to Frede's deathbed, the narrator recounts the first dream in the death entry. It features a home disrupted, which is not connected to Frede's death until after the fact, according to the narrator: 'I never thought of connecting the dream with Frede. … But now I know that it meant Frede's death' (*SJ2*: 288). However, once the connection is made, the symbolism is unquestioned in the clarity of hindsight, and the narrator quotes from King James Bible: 'Is not my house of life left unto me desolate – is not the inmost shrine of my heart narrowed down? Does not everything seem gone from me? Am I not left to furnish forth my soul's habitation afresh – if I can?' (*SJ2*: 288; Luke 13:35) Returning to the main narrative, the narrating I depicts the narrated I spending a day in Boston with a namesake and correspondent, Lucy Lincoln Montgomery – aptly fitting for the gothic theme of doubles and twins – which ends in a dramatic twist: 'Suddenly the phone rang. … I knew it must be bad news' (*SJ2*: 289). The calm narrative voice shifts to gothic vocabulary when the narrator describes the anguish of the narrated I: 'It fell on my heart like a knell of doom. "She will die – she will die," I moaned. I paced the floor in anguish' (*SJ2*: 289).

After this, a second dream is depicted, the result of the narrated I willing herself to dream the truth of Frede's illness. This time she knows that she is tempting fate, unlike when she unconsciously dreamt the first dream, which 'came as an unsought gift or warning from the Keepers of the Gate' (*SJ2*: 289). The second dream tells the narrated I that Frede will die, after which the narrator states, as if in a Greek tragedy: 'I had willed to tear aside the veil that hides the future and my punishment was the torture of the vision' (*SJ2*: 290). In a true gothic-romantic vein, the dreams are used to underline not only the dramatic events themselves but also the heroine's special supernatural characteristics, as a vessel of messages from the gods.

As in a fairy tale, the surroundings and spaces that lead the narrated I towards her dying friend are all significant in their symbolism and carefully illustrated in the published journals. A photograph of the entrance gates to Macdonald College, where Frede was teaching, is placed next to the text describing the narrated I arriving in the infirmary. It pictures a wintery landscape with trees white with snow in sharp contrast to the black rectangular gates that evoke images of both the gates of heaven

173 The narrator of the journals remarks in an entry dated April 9, 1930: 'There's no literature on earth I relish as I do a good ghost story' (*SJ4*: 46).

and hell (*SJ2*: 291). The photograph also ties in with Montgomery's subsequent depiction of watching Frede being cremated, 'between us the black blank unopening door of death' (*SJ2*: 299).[174] Later, when Frede's condition worsens, the narrated I is portrayed making her way to the infirmary 'down and down and down those interminable flights of stairs through the echoing, ghostly corridors … through the long "covered way" whose icy chill struck to my heart like a waft of death' (*SJ2*: 292). Frede lies at the end of this gloomy passage like Sleeping Beauty or Snow White, while the narrated I is confined into ever smaller spaces: '[I felt] as if I were in some hideous nightmare – or in some narrow cell of torment' (*SJ2*: 293).

In addition to this claustrophobic imagery, the death entry draws parallels to both prose fiction and poetry. When Montgomery is still in Boston, her lawyer reads a poem of Kipling to her, 'The City of Sleep', which evokes memories of Frede reciting the same poem: 'I could see her sitting in my rocking chair – I could hear her voice lingering caressingly on the lines, "We must come back with Policeman Day / Back from the city of sleep"' (*SJ2*: 290).[175] The intertextual significance of Kipling's poem to the entry is paramount. Whether Montgomery actually heard the poem right before Frede's death is questionable, but it provides a chilling undertone to this gothic entry by evoking longing to the 'City of Sleep' – a symbol of death – to which only the lucky few may enter, and from which 'the wakeful' are outcast. The poem's narrator paints a picture of another, sweeter world, 'the Merciful Town', whose gates close on the misfortunate, and since the last lines of the poem's every stanza beg the reader to 'pity us, ah pity us! / We wakeful', they indirectly implore the readers of the journal to sympathise with the narrated I who cannot follow her friend to the City of Sleep.

When the actual moment of death is depicted in the February 7, 1919 entry, the elements that connect the style to fictional precursors become even more evident. After the narrator has faithfully 'recorded' Frede's last words and their dialogue, there is a shift in focus from Frede to Montgomery (or to the narrating/narrated I) to show where the true point of focalisation lies in the entry: '*She died*. And I live to write it!' (*SJ2*: 295; emphasis original) Markedly, the shift is also from recording events to *writing* about them, to artistically narrate and create. The narrator underlines the loss of her friend and her own subsequent existence by drawing attention to the act

174 The paragraphs that depict Frede's cremation are laden with images of gates and doors such as in 'As we passed the gateway of the crematory grounds the bell in the belfry just beside it began to toll' (*SJ2*: 298) and 'Suddenly the grim black doors in front opened – the casket was pushed through them – they closed' (*SJ2*: 299).

175 Montgomery in part misquotes here. The last line of the two first stanzas in the poem goes: 'We must go back with Policeman Day / Back from the City of Sleep!' (see: http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/239784, April 7, 2015).

of writing, almost as if without it Frede's death would not become real, since notably the sentence does not read 'She died. And I live'. This subtle relocation in narration in order to draw attention to the act of writing is one of the dominant aspects of the death entry. After noting this and making it true by writing 'Frede is *dead*' (*SJ2*: 295; emphasis original), the narrating I is ready to move on to an emotional lament full of romantic yearning, which is striking in its highly literary style.

'How *can* I go on living when half my life has been wrenched away, leaving me torn and bleeding in heart and soul and mind' (*SJ2*: 295; emphasis original), asks the narrating I and goes on, addressing Frede: 'Yes, Frede, you did not suffer the pangs of death. It was *I – I –* as *you* would have suffered had it been I who went away!' (*SJ2*: 295; emphases original). This dramatic section cannot be read without intertextual association of several romance classics whose style Montgomery was more than familiar with. The strongest resemblance, in my opinion, is Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) in which Heathcliff's anguish over Cathy's death is portrayed in similar language: 'Oh, Cathy! Oh, my life! How can I bear it?' (Brontë 1847: ch XV); 'I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!' (Brontë 1847: ch. XVI; emphases original)[176] Noticeably, Heathcliff's and Cathy's relationship is depicted in much the same way as Montgomery's and Frede's, along with several other romances: they have an unearthly connection, they are not allowed to be together and eventually one of them dies, leaving the other to mourn over the loss.[177]

After another drawn line to break the passionate outpouring, the entry returns to the more composed narrative voice without abandoning references to fiction – this time Montgomery's own novel, *Anne's House of Dreams*: 'She [Frede] "went out as the dawn came in" – like old *Captain Jim* in my *House of Dreams*' (*SJ2*: 295; italics original). The relationship between fiction and life-writing offers interesting complications as the borders between 'real life' and 'invented life' are blurred. *Anne's House of Dreams* was written before Frede died in 1916, as discussed above, so Captain Jim's death scene could not have been influenced by her death. However, since the book itself draws to some extent on Montgomery's relationship with Frede, it is apt that Montgomery refers to it when depicting the physical end of this connection. Nevertheless, Montgomery also draws attention to how life

176 Montgomery mentions in her journal having read *Wuthering Heights* for instance in the April 11, 1934 entry (*SJ4*: 259).

177 As Cathy haunts Heathcliff after her death in *Wuthering Heights*, so do Montgomery and Frede have a pact to the effect that whoever dies first is to come and visit the survivor: '"Frede," I said earnestly, "you won't forget your promise to come and see me, will you?" "No," she said. "You'll be sure to come, won't you?" I insisted. "Certainly," she said, clearly and loudly. It was her last word' (*SJ2*: 294). Later on in the journal, Montgomery depicts Frede's 'visit' (*SJ2*: 320).

(and life-writing) can mimic fiction, not only the other way around. Being used to fictionalising her journal, Montgomery does not shy away from evoking analogies between her own fictional characters and scenes and real-life events. By doing so, she ultimately turns her life-writing into a sort of fiction in which Frede's death is equated with that of Captain Jim, by similar images and symbols.

Fictionalisation also extends to characterisation. The means to building an image of the narrated I as the main character of the death entry is direct and explicit. Being the tragic heroine, the narrated I suffers in almost hyperbolical ways: she goes into hysterics after Frede's death in laughing uncontrollably instead of crying; her pain is not only emotional but also physical; her mourning and grief have a special status, with the narrator stating that the staff of Frede's college 'knew no rest was possible for such pain as mine' (*SJ2*: 296; see also *SJ2*: 295, 297). One of the main objectives of the entry is to convince the readers that there is a special bond between the two women. While Montgomery remains the unquestionable heroine of the story and her suffering exceeds even the suffering of Frede, who is dying, Frede nonetheless has an important role in supporting the image of Montgomery as the most important person in her life. The way this is accomplished is by depicting Frede from Montgomery's point of view, with an admiring, sensual gaze, and thus affirming her erotic and intimate position in the life story of Montgomery.

Overall, the sensual style that is adopted for depicting Frede and Montgomery's memories of her cannot be dismissed as merely elaborate Victorian style. Firstly, everything in the journals is re-written during the twentieth century, thus not really being Victorian as such. Secondly, Montgomery does not employ this kind of style when depicting any of her other romances. As noted above, Montgomery rarely succumbs to overtly romantic style with her male suitors or with her husband, the only exception being the Herman Leard affair. Also in general, Montgomery is not an emotional writer, but rather guarded and devoid of sentiment.[178]

When sentiment is depicted, especially when it comes to courtship and love, it is usually done by conventional means, which underlines the controlled and staged image of romance created in the journals. Thus, the sensuality that seeps into the narrative in the death entry is noteworthy. Consider these images of Frede that the narrating I paints: '[V]isions of Frede as I saw her … her cheeks flushed, her eyes black and brilliant, the pendant glistening on her breast, the earrings caressing her cheeks' (*SJ2*: 301); 'In evening dress, with flushed cheeks and brilliant, mocking

178 Montgomery writes in an entry of September 27, 1913, referring to her difficulty on writing the third *Anne* book: 'It is the time of sentiment and I am not good at depicting sentiment – I can't do it well' (*SJ2*: 133).

eyes, Frede had a certain *beauté du diable* that was fascinating' (*SJ2*: 304; emphasis original); and the famished way the narrating I exclaims, 'yet how I hungered – and hunger – for that denied last look!' (*SJ2*: 297) after having learned that Frede's casket had already been closed.

Montgomery emphasises her special status in Frede's life at almost every turn of the death entry with striking narcissism, but especially towards the end of it when she writes a brief biography of Frede and depicts going over her belongings. On the walls of Frede's room hang her favourite pictures, of which a photo of Montgomery is mentioned first; there are cards 'full of little intimate jesting messages only we two could understand' (*SJ2*: 300); and finally, Frede's letter that instructs how to distribute her personal things begins 'Dear Maud or mother or husband' (*SJ2*: 300). The narrating I gloats: 'My name came first to her instinctively – before even that of the mother … and the boyish husband who had caught her fancy in the glamor of his uniform…. No, *I* came first – the old friend to whom she had always turned in her hours of need' (*SJ2*: 300; emphasis original). Furthermore, Montgomery depicts a habit of her and Frede's of having a pact of never saying good bye: '[W]e would always part with a laugh and a gay wave of the hand' (*SJ2*: 297). This pact is transmitted to the fictional Emily Starr and Dean Priest in *Emily of New Moon* (*ENM*: 294), who in the later books become lovers – although somewhat uncomfortably and without consummation – once again proving how female intimacy turns into conventional romance in the public context.

Montgomery then delves into depicting Frede's life by establishing the frames of their friendship. Since the focaliser in Frede's biography is Montgomery and Frede is seen and described through a lover's gaze, it is natural that Montgomery overtly states 'how intimately the strands of our lives were woven together' and how from the beginning of the friendship 'we were "part of one another"' (*SJ2*: 301, 303). The twin imagery and the similarities in their lives are also furthermore stressed: 'Frede, *like myself*, had a somewhat lonely and misunderstood childhood' (*SJ2*: 303; emphasis added); 'She had … greenish-gray eyes that, *like mine*, had the Montgomery trick of seeming black at night, owing to the dilation of the pupils' (*SJ2*: 304; emphasis added).

After constituting the intimate bonds, the table is set for a declaration of love, in which the narrator addresses Frede directly: 'I will leave none behind me to whom I will mean what you meant to me – no, not even if my husband outlives me. For men do not feel these things as women do' (*SJ2*: 300). By adding the last sentence almost as an afterthought, the narrator cuts men off the equation of intimate love, something which resonates with the overall tone of the death entry. With

this elaborately constructed artistic entry, Montgomery reaches the apex of her portrayal of female intimacy after which there can be no doubt that this type of love is presented as the most highly valued in the discourse of romance in the journals.

The entries following the death entry continue its gothic theme by depicting dreams and nightmares connected to Frede's passing. In the entry of February 9, 1919 the narrator mentions that she has had a 'ghastly dream' (*SJ2*: 306) about Frede, in which she tried to suffocate Frede with a coffin lid. In another entry dated April 16, 1919, a dream of seeing Frede drown is described (*SJ2*: 315). Before this entry, the entry of April 13, 1919 depicts Montgomery and her friends trying their luck with a Ouija board – a popular spiritist past time in the early decades of the twentieth century – and summon up a message from Frede (*SJ2*: 314). Finally, in the entry of May 21, 1919 Montgomery depicts how Frede 'appears' to her in a difficult situation and how 'the conviction [of Frede's presence] brought comfort and strength and calmness' (*SJ2*: 320). Temma F. Berg (1994: 43) aptly interprets these dreams as symbolising Montgomery's need to repress her intense female friendships. The dreams about Frede furthermore prove that the stylistic effects of the death entry are far-flung within the entirety of the journals. After Montgomery has adopted this lamenting and dramatic style in the death entry, she seems reluctant to let go of it when mentioning Frede in the journals.

The main point about the entries about Frede in the later journal volumes – volumes three to five of *The Selected Journals* – is that once the highly romantic voice is established by Montgomery, it becomes somewhat erased by the editors of the published journals. It is likely that the editors wanted to end the story of Frede in a dramatically fitting place – the death entry –, even though in Montgomery's own narrative the story of their relationship continues. Especially in the published volume three (*SJ3*), most mentions of Frede have been omitted. The editors overtly state this in the introduction to the third volume: 'We have omitted regretfully some of the threnodies of grief which pour out of each year on the anniversary of Frederica Campbell's death' (*SJ3*: xxv). However, there is no mention that it is not only for repetitive reasons that 'the threnodies of grief' have been omitted, but also because of the overtly romantic tone of these entries. It seems probable that the editors were aware of the fact, based on the reception of the first two volumes, that some readers might interpret Montgomery's description of her relationship with Frede as lesbianism and thus wanted to efface the elaborate, romantic style of the third volume.

For instance, part of the entry dated January 24, 1925 was omitted from the published volume three, but its exclusion was not marked in the text nor mentioned

in the list of omissions. In this entry, the narrator notes: 'To-night six years ago I watched by Frede's deathbed and saw the being I loved most among women slowly gasping her life away before me. That night and the awful dawn that followed it shattered my heart. Before that the world was good to me, no matter what happened, just because she was in it' (UJ6: 228–229). Considering the subject matter of this passage –, a highly romantic outpouring that tallies with the earlier entries on Frede – it seems odd that it was left out of the published volume. However, taking into account its intimate tone and the partial evasion of female intimacy from the journals, the omission makes sense. I discuss the editing out of female intimacy in *The Selected Journals* in more detail in the next chapter.

Nonetheless, if one ignores the omissions and examines the handwritten journal entries, it becomes clear that the romantic discourse Montgomery creates around Frede in the pre-death entries and the death entry continues throughout the later journal volumes, until the very end. In volumes eight to ten of the unpublished journals (1929–1942), mentions of Frede become sparse and Montgomery's other close friend Nora Lefurgey as well as her fan Isabel Anderson replace and take over Frede's literary role. However, the repeated 'spasm[s] of longing' (*SJ2*: 339) for Frede still carry a considerable importance in the representation of romance in the journals. Frede remains the love of Montgomery's life in the diary even when mentions of her are not so frequent. For instance, Montgomery marks Frede's status by ending the unpublished volume four (1916-1919) in these words on Frede: 'Perhaps, when the night of the universe is over she and I will find each other again. But I want her now' (*SJ2*: 359). What could be artistically more suitable when finishing a volume that records the evolving of their friendship? In addition, this is a very articulate way of underlining the importance of this particular female romance to Montgomery's life as it is composed in the journals.

Furthermore, Montgomery faithfully marks the anniversary of Frede's death in the journals, hardly missing a year and goes on to do so until she stops writing in the journal altogether. By way of contrast, she almost never notes her wedding anniversary or even her own birthday in the journals. The way the anniversary of Frede's death is recorded builds into the overall way of creating an emblem of Frede in the journals. Frede comes to symbolise perfect, untainted love in the later volumes, artfully accomplished by reminiscing her death every year, recording visits to her grave, starting to call her 'beloved' and finally by referring to a photo of Frede repeatedly in volumes nine and ten (1933–1942).

Montgomery pastes this photo of Frede standing amid some birch trees into the journals several times and mentions it as often after her death.[179] For instance, in the entry of December 27, 1929, which begins the handwritten ledger volume eight, the narrated I longingly refers to the photo: '[I] lie in the darkness feeling that Frede is watching just above me and … if I just knew the exact magic to make, I could step up into the picture and clasp hands with her' (*SJ4*: 27). The photo itself and references to it constitute Frede's role in the journals as symbolically and literarily significant and showcase one of the main narratives of Montgomery's life story, that of female intimacy.

5.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

My aim in this chapter has been to demonstrate that taking into account Montgomery's female romances is not merely 'a reading' of the journals, which could be easily undermined by a contrasting reading. Instead, by providing ample examples from the journals – both published and unpublished – I have attempted to prove that the romantic discourse, female intimacy included, is one of the main narratives in Montgomery's journals, artistically and elaborately coined by their author, who unarguably saw it as her primary material and worth including in the journals for a posthumous audience. The fact that the female intimacy discourse has to a certain extent been erased from the published journals and that scholarship on this topic is still evolving shows that not only is homophobia still a topical issue in our society but also that scholars and readers alike might lack tools to analyse romance material that is not based on male-female infatuation. Female intimacy needs to be discussed within the larger context of romance discourse in literature and life-writing and understood by its own standards, not merely as a deviation from the conventional romance plot.

In its textual representation, romance between women as presented in Montgomery's journals offers a satisfying alternative culmination to the conventional romance plot. Since Montgomery's romances with men are portrayed as unsatisfactory to say the least, it seems appropriate that the female romance provides the readers with a more gratifying parallel ending. In the case of Frede, even though not ending in marriage but the loved one's death, the romance with her perseveres and is everlasting, which tallies with the most conventional romantic

179 See e.g. December 27, 1929 (*SJ4*: 27); January 25, 1934 (*SJ4*: 252); September 29, 1935 (*SJ5*: 38–39); and June 15, 1939 (*SJ5*: 341). See also Cavert's (2003) article 'Frede: More than Friend and Cousin', which mentions the photo and references to it in the handwritten journals.

love ideals. Thus, we can note that the 'controversial' female intimacy can actually be more traditional and conventional in its representation of love than the actual conventional romance, in Montgomery's journals at least. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that in her female intimacy discourse Montgomery not only presents an alternative to conventional romance but also tries out possible realities, a fantasy of sorts of 'what might have been'.

In the last entry that mentions Frede, dated June 15, 1939, Montgomery once more draws attention to the photo of Frede that hangs on her bedroom wall – 'I wish I could croon some fairy spell and spring into the picture beside her' (*SJ5*: 341) – and composes a final ode to her beloved friend. Two weeks after this entry Montgomery stops writing in her journal completely, three years before her death in 1942. By mentioning her wish to join Frede, Montgomery not only foreshadows her own approaching death, which possibly was a suicide, but also creates one last lament to Frede and their life-long relationship: '[S]ome day I will step into that picture and hold out my hands to her as she stands among the shadows and say "Beloved, we are *together again* and the years of our severance are as if they had never been"' (*SJ5*: 341; emphasis original).

With an ending such as this to the romantic narrative that spans over almost the entire journal, it becomes impossible to overlook the way Montgomery writes about her female friends, Frede in particular, even if there were others. The most striking feature of this female intimacy discourse is that Montgomery does not find the need to censor or edit it out when she copies her diaries into the legal-sized ledgers or prepares an abridged typescript of them. Even after her 'lesbian scare' with Isabel Anderson in the 1930s (see below), Montgomery sees her own intimate female relationships as valid representations of love, whereas she decidedly censors many of her romances with men. For instance, in the typescript version of the journal, Herman Leard's and Edwin Simpson's names are crossed over, while Frede's and Isabel Anderson's names remain intact.

After having analysed in detail Montgomery's portrayal of her relationship with Frederica Campbell, I move on to examine a different type of representation of female intimacy in which the boundaries between romantic friendship and lesbianism are addressed more openly. While basing the analysis of Montgomery's account of her interactions with Isabel Anderson on close reading, as I did in this chapter, I will expand the discussion and examine more broadly Montgomery's discourse of romance and the historical and theoretical insights on same-sex love that might explain and help us to understand some of her textual strategies. In the next chapter I also scrutinise the editorial choices over female intimacy in Montgomery's journals and their implications.

CHAPTER 6

FEMALE INTIMACY GONE AWRY: ISABEL ANDERSON AS A LESBIAN

The focus of this chapter is on a striking anti-romantic representation of female intimacy. Isabel Anderson, an avid fan and female friend, entered Montgomery's life in 1926 and stayed in it, with varying presence, until Montgomery's death in 1942. Isabel's appearance in the journals in 1930 is an intriguing episode and wholly unique.[180] When writing about her relationship with Isabel Anderson, Montgomery for the first time openly scrutinises romance with a woman – no matter that it is far from a satisfying one and might even be considered one-sided. This is also the first and only occasion when Montgomery overtly interprets sexual categories, such as lesbianism, and tries to define herself and her friend accordingly. If indeed her reasons for doing so were merely to protect her posthumous reputation, it does not change the fact that this is the only occurrence in the journals when a relationship is so systematically represented. Neither concerning Herman Leard – whose effect is based on theatricality rather than truthfulness – nor Frede Campbell does Montgomery lay out the details and analyse them as concisely and methodologically as with Isabel Anderson.

It is evident that much of this is motivated by Montgomery's 'lesbian panic'.[181] As Robinson (2012: 170, 178) has argued, the entries on Isabel Anderson prove that the discourse on sexuality was changing drastically in the 1920s and 1930s in Canada and the rest of the world and that Montgomery was acutely aware of it. Instead of being called romantic friendships, largely idealised, women's same-sex interactions were now labelled as *lesbian* with an emphasis on the pathological, the inverted and the perverse aspects of it. By labelling Isabel as lesbian in her journal text, Montgomery in turn exercises authorial, and authoritative, control over Isabel's demonstration of

180 February 15, 1930 (UJ8: 10–12) is when Isabel is first mentioned by name in the journals. Notably, this entry was omitted from *The Selected Journals*. However, as the notes to *The Selected Journals* (*SJ4*: 380) indicate, Isabel is anonymously referred to already in the entry of July 17, 1926 (*SJ3*: 299).

181 Patricia Juliana Smith (1997: 2) defines *lesbian panic* 'in terms of narrative … [as] the disruptive action or reaction that occurs when a character – or, conceivably, an author – is either unable or unwilling to confront or reveal her own lesbianism or lesbian desire.'

love while simultaneously ensuring her own character as heterosexual and normal, as Robinson (2012: 184) has demonstrated.

However, Isabel's appearance in the journals is not only a case study by Montgomery on lesbianism as a new medical category, but a vigorous antithesis to Montgomery's more satisfying female romances, with friends such as Frederica Campbell, Nora Lefurgey and Laura Pritchard Agnew. As a matter of fact, it is almost a horror version of such relations, mainly but not only because of the disturbing lesbian aspects of it. This kind of juxtaposing is typical for the journals and in the Isabel entries the 'unbearable' fan is contrasted also with old male beaux, such as Nate Lockhart.

Montgomery's relationship with Isabel remains an anomaly in Montgomery scholarship. Laura Robinson's paper 'Sex Matters: L.M. Montgomery, Friendship, and Sexuality' (2012) and Mary Beth Cavert's essay in *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery* (2005) are the few exceptions,[182] and often it seems that this 'queer' episode is seen as not having anything to do with Montgomery's *real* romances with men. The case of Isabel Anderson has not yet been studied as part of the overall romantic life story of Montgomery and her romantic discourse in the journals. By analysing the Isabel Anderson entries, I hope to prove that Montgomery's representation of her relationship with Isabel, as in the case of Herman Leard and Frede Campbell, is part of the general narrative of romance in the journals and should not be trivialised or overlooked.

Furthermore, in this final analytical chapter I once again demonstrate the connections between life-writing and fiction, in which genres such as diary and romance novel affect each other, especially when it comes to romantic representations. Montgomery's portrayal of Isabel is the final romantic chapter in her life story and is hence written with appropriate narrative emphasis. Thus, Isabel's as well as the narrated I's characterisation borrow from the fiction of the 1920s and 1930s by reproducing the clichéd images of the lesbian. My claim is that Montgomery creates this final narrative of love – in the form of a romance gone awry – because it is a good story, a romantically satisfying tale of unrequited love. Yet she needs to contest any assumptions of homosexuality by bringing it out and overtly discussing it. As I demonstrate, however, it is not homosexuality but complex romance between two women that is the main focus of the Isabel Anderson entries.

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182 Rubio (2008: 394–403) also discusses Isabel in her biography on Montgomery, which I will scrutinise in 6.2.

6.1 ISABEL ANDERSON AS AN UNBEARABLE FAN

Isabel Anderson enters Montgomery's journals almost unnoticeably.[183] As so often in the journals, Montgomery places a hint of future conflict and drama in a harmless aside in the July 17, 1926 entry: 'Had a very adoring letter from a young girl in Acton yesterday. She vowed that if I were in Acton instead of Norval she and the other young girls would form a guard around me to keep me from all annoyances and guard me like a saint in a shrine etc. etc.' (*SJ3*: 299). At this point, the narrator still supposes Isabel to be a young girl, a fact that is later corrected. Nevertheless, she exclaims ironically after the fan's absurd fantasy, 'How n–i–i–c–e!!' (*SJ3*: 299).

There is no doubt that Montgomery indeed received Isabel's first letter in 1926, but there is also no doubt that she inserted this first anonymous mention of her in the journals conscious of what lay ahead and what purpose Isabel would serve in the journals, since everything in the extant ledgers was written and edited by Montgomery during her later years.[184] The dramatic effect alone of the narrating I portraying Isabel first as a young girl and later revealing her real age to the readers – 'Isobel was … almost thirty I should say' (*SJ4*: 33) – is significant to the readers' expectations of the affair, mainly by characterising Isabel right from the start as somehow strange and not living up to the expectations. The narrator underlines this fact: 'I was surprised to find that Isobel was not overly young.… I had supposed from her gushing letters that she must be about eighteen' (*SJ4*: 33).

Especially Mary Beth Cavert (2005, 2004a) has extensively studied the historical details of Isabel Anderson's life. Her research demonstrates that Montgomery's depiction of Isabel is erroneous in some respects or at least one-sided. Isabel Anderson (1896–1994) was a school teacher based in Acton, a small

183 Isabel's name is spelled 'Isobel' in *The Selected Journals* to protect her identity. Her surname was included in the last volume of the published journals, but the spelling of her first name was not altered. This is noteworthy, because Isabel Anderson is the only character and historical person in the journals whose name was deliberately changed in the publication process. Robinson (2004: 26) draws attention to the editors offering only a brief explanation for this: 'For legal reasons, we have excised one surname' (*SJ4*: xxix). Robinson (2004: 26) goes on: 'This decision to hide Isobel's identity ultimately accepts and reinscribes the fear of homosexuality.' Montgomery's spelling of Isabel's name is rather consistently 'Isabel' in the unpublished journals. Also in the typescript of the journals, Montgomery employs Isabel's full name. Throughout this chapter I refer to Isabel by her actual name. However, when quoting from *The Selected Journals*, I do not alter the alternate spelling of her name as 'Isobel' in order to highlight that a character by that name is created in the published journals who is slightly different from the one that appears in the handwritten journals.

184 As Cavert (2005: 118) notes, the year 1926 marks the move of the Macdonalds to Norval in February, a neighbouring town to Acton where Isabel Anderson lived. This must have prompted Isabel to write to Montgomery, as she was thrilled to have her favourite author so close to her.

town in Southern Ontario, close to Norval where Montgomery lived with her family between 1926 and 1935, and she was twenty-two years Montgomery's junior. She had read and loved Montgomery's books since childhood, thus her ardent fan-like behaviour towards the books' author is not too unexpected or bizarre. While it is apparent that 'Montgomery recast Isabel from an enthusiastic bright young woman to an obsessed, insane and child-like creature', as Cavert (2004a: 12) notes, I am not interested in the historical truthfulness of Montgomery's account as such, or the real-life personality of Isabel, even though historical facts must also be taken into account when studying life-writing. Rather, I examine what Isabel's role and function in the journals are for the construction of the romantic narrative and why Montgomery presents her in such an unkind light. Cavert (2004a: 12) aptly points out that Isabel's life and character extend well beyond 'the caricature that the Montgomery journals record'. In addition to a historical checking of facts, a detailed reading of the presentation of their relationship can also recast and open up the complexities of this anti-romance.

When Isabel finally appears on the journal's pages, it happens rather suddenly, since the first four years of Montgomery's and Isabel's interactions are recorded only in retrospect in the March 1, 1930 entry. As Cavert (2004a: 9) has noted, based mainly on Montgomery's own account, Montgomery met with Isabel at least four times between July 1926 and August 1929, that is, before Isabel became 'a problem'. Montgomery has supper with Isabel's family (*SJ4*: 33), accepts another invitation (*SJ4*: 33), goes to Isabel's mother's funeral in April 1929 (Cavert 2004a: 9; *SJ4*: 33) and spends a day with Isabel and her sister in August 1929 (*SJ4*: 34). Therefore, their relationship is already well-established and rather close, exceeding the limits of a mere fan-like connection, at the point when Montgomery introduces Isabel by name in the journals.

February 15, 1930 is the first time Isabel Anderson is overtly mentioned in the handwritten journal-ledgers: 'Yesterday [February 14] I went up to Acton to see Isabel Anderson and came home to-day after twelve hours dreary boredom. I am tired – too tired – and "would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me" concerning certain people and certain things' (UJ8: 10–12).[185] Considering the fact that this is at least the fifth time Montgomery has met with Isabel, it is telling that there is no mention of the previous visits in the journal. This short reference to Isabel was left out of the published journals, since the following retrospective entry

185 As so often in her journals, Montgomery quotes Alfred Tennyson's poem 'Break, Break, Break'. Note that the day Montgomery visits Isabel is February 14, Valentine's Day. This is the first time Montgomery spends a night at Isabel's home.

of March 1, 1930 better depicts the conditions of the relationship. However, the paragraph is not without importance in the overall story that Montgomery is about to tell. Montgomery already here emphatically underlines that she does not enjoy visiting Isabel and that she is deliberately refraining from uttering her discontent. As carefully as a detective-story writer, Montgomery lays the basis of a coming conflict. What remains unexplained, of course, is why she has agreed to spend a significant amount of time, a night and a day, with Isabel, a mere acquaintance whose company she apparently does not enjoy, during her already exceedingly busy life. The explanation comes later, when Montgomery is ready to write up a long retrospective entry.

This retrospective entry discussing Isabel and her interactions with Montgomery comes on March 1, 1930, which covers almost eleven pages in the published journal (*SJ4*: 32–43) and is even longer in the original, unpublished manuscript (over 30 handwritten pages, see UJ8: 13–46).[186] This is where Montgomery properly begins the tale of Isabel and handles it in her familiar manner. Rather than providing observations about Isabel along the way in the journals, Montgomery prefers to unveil the 'Whole Story' as one long narrative that she can control. It is likely that Montgomery did write about Isabel between 1926 and 1930 in her original notebooks – she was in the habit of jotting down quick notes of each day's events – but she probably omitted these from the final ledger-versions. What is peculiar about the March 1, 1930 entry is that it combines two very different topics: Isabel and criticism of Montgomery's books. As I demonstrate in 6.3 however, these seemingly unrelated parts actually form a recurrent pattern in the Isabel entries. Montgomery continually connects the discussion on Isabel with topics that reassert her own normality and her public role as an author.

In this way, Montgomery introduces the motif of the pestering fan in the March 1, 1930 entry by depicting her own mental state at this time: 'I have been hovering on the brink of a nervous breakdown all winter' (*SJ4*: 32). Her mood is further impaired by over a hundred fan letters from Australia that make her state despairingly: '[M]y fan correspondence has become a nightmare' (*SJ4*: 32). The context is laid out: Montgomery, the martyred protagonist in this tale of persecution, is a world-famous author, exceedingly busy and already stressed out by her obligations to her readers. By mentioning the Australian fan letters, the narrator candidly directs the entry's focus to unbearable fans. And this is precisely Isabel's main role. Right from the start, the narrator underlines Isabel's part in the journals as a problem

186 The long section at the end of the entry that discusses criticism of Montgomery's books was shortened extensively in *The Selected Journals* (see *SJ4*: 36–43).

by mentioning the word twice in one short paragraph: 'I have another *problem* on my hands – something quite different from anything I have ever been up against. Like most people I have met many *problems* in my life and very few, if any, ever completely floored me' (*SJ4*: 33; emphases added). In addition to being a problem, the tale of Isabel is tied to sickness, disease and disgust from the first paragraph and is thus indirectly linked to lesbianism as pathological: 'I am up against something … which *nauseates* me past all telling' (*SJ4*: 33; emphasis added).

However, before Isabel is presented in the journals as a lesbian, she must be introduced as an insufferable fan, since it is one of her main purposes in the journals. The fact that Isabel is a fan complements and in part explains her alleged lesbianism, because it grounds her appearance in Montgomery's life in the first place and gives meaning to her disturbing characteristics. In the depiction of the relationship, distance is carefully created between the two women by their set roles as worshipped author and worshipping fan. For instance, the narrator often refers to Isabel with her full name (which does not appear in *The Selected Journals*) as if to create an official setting for the fan when presenting her in the journals. However, in the letters quoted in the diary, Montgomery addresses Isabel in a more endearing and familiar manner, as in 'My dear Isobel' (*SJ4*: 210). Isabel on the other hand repeatedly refers to the famous author as 'my dear' or 'my beloved darling' (*SJ4*: 185), but interestingly enough most of her letters, quoted in the journals, also begin with a distanced address such as in 'Dear Mrs. MacDonald' (*SJ4*: 210).

Although Montgomery does not overtly discuss it in the journals, fan culture as well as celebrity culture was changing (see York 2004: 108) at the time when Isabel entered Montgomery's life circle. Montgomery herself was used to being the object of admiration of millions of Anne fans, but Isabel's behaviour floored her. Isabel, as presented in the journals, resembles that of a latter-day fan in her active contact and identification with the celebrity. Her wish to 'die for love of L.M. Montgomery' (*SJ4*: 166) not only places Montgomery on an altar, but reveals Isabel's desire to *become* famous through a link to her favourite author: 'That would invest me with glory and beauty and fame and I should have forever from the hearts of the world what I craved from you and you denied' (*SJ4*: 166).

Notably, even the last mention of Isabel in the journals, dated January 23, 1939, characterises her rather as a fan than a sexual deviant: 'Had a letter from Isobel. She has transferred her passion for Queen Marie to King Carol and raves of him ad nauseam. Poor Isobel! But I daresay it lends a sort of glamor to her life and so helps her to live' (*SJ4*: 302). By such a condescending tone, the narrator manages to define

Isabel as epitomising a pathetic fan, who craves for glamour with an association to royalty and other famous people in order to fill the emptiness in her life.

To return to the March 1, 1930 entry, *The Selected Journals* (volume 4) succeeds in emphasising the 'crazy fan' image that the narrator of the journals advocates. This long entry that introduces Isabel is illustrated with a photograph of her in a white lace dress with a wide belt and a prominent necklace around her neck (*SJ4*: 33).[187] Her face is blurred so as to protect her identity, which is not done to any of the other photos included in *The Selected Journals*. The caption states 'Isobel in Fancy Dress' after Montgomery's own caption in her handwritten original (*SJ4*: 33; UJ8: 15), which explains Isabel's rather peculiar outfit. The effect of this eerie picture next to the intriguing text is striking: Isabel appears from the pages of the published journal as a madwoman, and what is more, a dangerous madwoman, since the blurred face evokes images of criminals and other dubious people. Since in the next paragraph Isabel is only referred to by her first name, with all references to her hometown removed, she comes out in the published journal very much as an unwanted person, who is also rather ridiculous.[188] In contrast, in the original unpublished journals Montgomery properly introduces Isabel by conveying the fact that she lives with her sister and mother in Acton and is a school-teacher. While she proceeds to paint a picture of Isabel as a possibly harmful eccentric, the published journal manages to emphasize this side of the story.[189]

The narrator commences the actual narrative in the March 1, 1930 entry: 'When I came to Norval I got a letter from a girl [in Acton] … named Isobel [Anderson]' (*SJ4*: 33). She goes on to state that although the letter was 'too gushing and adoring', it was also 'witty and brilliant and entirely delightful' (*SJ4*: 33), which is not mentioned in the original entry depicting the receiving of this first letter (July 17, 1926, *SJ3*: 299). Although the readers do not know what is coming – that is, that Isabel will be cast as a perverted lesbian – the narrator is careful to plant her excuses for remaining in contact with Isabel throughout the text. Montgomery was well aware that she had to offer a plausible defence in her account of the relationship, because one of the

187 This is the same photo Montgomery uses in the original journal (see UJ8: 15).

188 The abridged section in *The Selected Journals* is rather jumbled: 'When I came to Norval I got a letter from a girl…named Isobel…At the time I knew nothing of her but soon discovered that she was a school-teacher…, where she lived with her widowed mother and her sister…' (*SJ4*: 33).

189 See also the photograph of Isabel in Rubio's (2008: 488) biography. This picture is noticeably different from the one in *The Selected Journals*. Here Isabel appears laughing in a becoming outfit and looks warmly and congenially at the photographer, who is quite likely Montgomery herself.

main purposes of the Isabel entries was to protect her from future blemishes to her reputation. Hence, the narrator is careful to stress that the narrated I had continued the correspondence because the letters were brilliant, but that she had already then begun to feel slightly uneasy: 'Her [Isabel's] letters were a little – just a little – "too–too" it seemed to me' (*SJ4*: 33). The narrator also defends the decision to finally go and visit the persistent fan by the fact that Isabel had had an operation and was 'just out of the hospital' (*SJ4*: 33), presenting the narrated I as a benefactor.

The main narrative tactic in the March 1, 1930 entry is to present Isabel as unattractive. This emphasises Montgomery's neutrality and the one-sidedness of their relationship: it is Isabel who is obsessed and head over heels in love, while Montgomery is detached and simply performing her duty as a public person. However, if one considers Montgomery's earlier depictions of romance, the Isabel entries can be placed in a wider context. Montgomery is not only presenting herself in a positive light while she composes a narrative on lesbianism, a new phenomenon in the 1930s. Rather, she is creating another tale of love, a final romantic chapter in the journals, and she handles it in the same way as the earlier romances. In the two suitors entries Montgomery trashed 'the wrong suitor' Edwin Simpson in order to highlight the romantic significance of 'the right suitor' Herman Leard. In a slightly more complex way, she now presents Isabel Anderson as the wrong suitor, while reminding the readers of other better-suited lovers, such as Frede Campbell and a childhood sweetheart, Nate Lockhart, as I will show in 6.3.

To begin with, Isabel is not 'overly young' (*SJ4*: 33) – a feature that works against her, since her behaviour would better suit a young girl. She is 'extremely dull company', 'could not talk on any subject', and 'appeared to have read nothing' (*SJ4*: 33). Especially the latter quotation seems a blatant overstatement as Isabel Anderson was 'an active and successful school-teacher, church volunteer, writer, and witty poet', as Robinson (2012: 168) notes. Montgomery has a tendency to bend the truth in her favour and sometimes to degrade the people she depicts if it serves her purpose, even when she ends up contradicting herself.[190] Furthermore, Isabel is like a monster that persecutes the narrated I with phone calls, letters and invitations (*SJ4*: 33). The vocabulary is very pejorative even before anything disturbing happens. When the narrated I calls on Isabel, the visits are 'like nightmares' and when the narrator depicts Isabel's mother's funeral, she is compelled 'by truth' to

190 For instance, Herman Leard, whom Montgomery presents as a simple farmer who has no brains (see e.g. *My Dear Mr. M*: 29; *SJ4*: 145; chapter 3), is nevertheless more than once described reading a book in the scenes where he and the narrated I meet.

state that 'she [Isabel] did not seem to feel her mother's death very keenly' (*SJ4*: 33–34).[191]

Isabel's character, then, is consistently built to be a stalker-like fan who is obsessed and monstrous. The narrator is sorry for Isabel who is a 'lonely, pathetic creature, with no real interest, hope or ambition in life' (*SJ4*: 34). Worse still, Isabel does not have a boyfriend, even though she is 'of average good looks' (*SJ4*: 34). This condescending tone continues throughout the entries. Notably, it is Isabel's inability to conform to the expected forms of romantic behaviour that Montgomery pinpoints when negating her. Isabel's exaggerated romantic gestures and the fact that the object of her desire is a woman make her conduct unacceptable. She is to be pitied because she has never had a beau, but she is also to be loathed because she is clearly to blame for this, since it cannot be her looks that are at fault.

How can one explain and historically contextualise Isabel's heightened influence on Montgomery's life and her journals between 1929 and 1932? First of all, the entries in the journal around 1930 repeatedly depict the narrated I as lonesome at this point in time, which prepares the ground for Isabel's appearance. For instance, the May 10, 1930 entry entails the sentence, 'Today I have been alone and very lonely' (*SJ4*: 49), in addition to which the narrator states after a friend Mary Beaton's visit on July 4, 1930: '[T]onight I am lonesome. I miss Mary and I feel blue and tired of everything' (*SJ4*: 60). A few weeks later, she repeats in an entry dated July 26, 1930, 'Tonight I am blue and lonely, missing Bertie' (*SJ4*: 61), referring to another friend Bertha 'Bertie' McIntyre's visit.

Out of Montgomery's circle of close female friends, only Nora Lefurgey was close enough for regular visits. She had recently moved to Toronto, near Norval, in 1928 (see *SJ3*: 377), while Bertie McIntyre lived in British Columbia on the other side of Canada. Montgomery, now in her fifties, had not as yet been reunited with the friend of her youth, Laura Pritchard Agnew, who lived in Saskatchewan, and Frederica Campbell had been dead for a decade. Montgomery usually had at least one or two female confidantes in her life and thus it is tempting to speculate that Isabel filled some of this gap. At least in the journal text she certainly does. On the other hand, Isabel's mother died in 1929 after which her sister left to become a missionary, which probably heightened Isabel's loneliness. Hence, the reaction of both women, one pursuing friendship and love, the other reluctantly accepting and conforming, is rather natural and understandable.

191 This sentence was crossed over in the typescript that Montgomery prepared of her journals. It seems that Montgomery wanted to tone down some of the harsh comments about Isabel before her death. Cavert (November 3, 2014, email to the author) also points out that Montgomery probably omitted this sentence from the typescript because she knew it was not truthful and Isabel would outlive her to contradict it, if the journals were published posthumously.

As Rubio (2008: 395) aptly points out, there were some superficial similarities between Isabel and Montgomery. Isabel's father had been a village postmaster like Montgomery's grandfather, and both women wrote poetry (Rubio 2008: 395; see also Cavert 2004a: 12). What is more, Montgomery had also endured isolated periods in her life, thus she sympathised with Isabel's loneliness at first (Rubio 2008: 395). However, this time in the journal's narrative, the twin imagery is turned on its head and Isabel stands for the horrendous version of female intimacy contrasted with such friends as Nora Lefurgey. For instance, just like the scene in which Montgomery admires her cousin Frede Campbell (*SJ2*: 301), the narrator depicts how Isabel in turn admires Montgomery, which switches admiration into abhorrence: 'There I had to sit and try to talk while she [Isabel] sat opposite me and devoured me with her eyes. They were dreadful – the eyes of a tortured soul' (*SJ4*: 219).

What is more, during this time, Montgomery was also worried about her public image in more general terms and not merely in relation to Isabel. For instance, during the trial of the son of Montgomery's old friend, Mary Beaton, the narrator worriedly states: 'If he [the reporter] had known that the woman who was with Mary [Beaton] was "L.M. Montgomery" the case would have come out on the front page with headlines, probably adorned with *my* picture, as all the papers carry a cut of it' (*SJ4*: 58; emphasis original). She continues depicting the narrated I's apprehension about a possible scandal, 'I was very nervous all the time I was in court lest I be recognized.... The scandal would be horrible and our congregation would buzz like a hive' (*SJ4*: 58). Montgomery was acutely conscious of her role as a public figure as well as a minister's wife in a small town, and this awareness was a major factor behind how the Isabel entries were constructed. As Lorraine York (2004: 101) has argued, Montgomery was 'unusually aware of and articulate about the conditions and ironies of her celebrity'. The gap between Isabel, the lesbian maniac, and Montgomery, the respectable author and minister's wife, thus had to be as wide as possible in the narrative.

When Montgomery finally introduces the topic of lesbianism into the storyline of the journals in the March 1, 1930 entry, it is not without proper drama and emphasis, mainly in order to highlight the narrator's awareness of the risky topic. Paraphrasing Isabel's letter, in which Isabel confesses that she is 'losing her mind' (*SJ4*: 34), the narrator recounts how '[Isabel] wanted to come down to Norval and stay all night at the manse – and she *wanted to sleep with me*' (*SJ4*: 34; emphasis original). As we can see, Montgomery makes use of italics in order to underline the horror of Isabel's suggestion. Then, the narrator declares, '[The letter] disgusted

me. For at last I knew the truth about Isobel' (*SJ4*: 34), and goes on to debate the subject of 'sex perverts' at length.

Before analysing Montgomery's discussion on 'sex perverts' in more detail, however, the question to ask is why Montgomery incorporates the theme of lesbianism in her journals at all. First of all, she could have easily excluded the tale of Isabel from her diary, as she did with so many other people and events in her life.[192] Even so, there was no evident need to copy and paraphrase Isabel's letters and communications in such detail. Indeed, Montgomery rarely did so with any other letters, even of people who were closer to her. Also, Montgomery did not need to analyse Isabel's character in the light of the newly developed language of sexual categories, as there is hardly any overt mention of sex or eroticism elsewhere in the journals.

The obvious answer is that Montgomery felt the need to protect her reputation.[193] As noted above, even the connection with a minor trial would have been catastrophic to Montgomery, let alone a scandal involving a 'sex pervert' and the famous author of *Anne of Green Gables*. However, there is only Montgomery's account of the affair to support this reading and it is decidedly a reading that is planted in the journal by Montgomery. Only in the journals does Montgomery represent herself as a famous person chased into the corner by a hysterical fan. Only within this personal medium does she speculate that Isabel might be suicidal and cause a scandal, and it is only here that she presents evidence for these speculations. For instance, Montgomery's friend Nora plays the part of an eye-witness who cautions Montgomery to cut Isabel off in fear of getting 'involved in heaven knows what dreadful scandal some day' (*SJ4*: 186).[194] Furthermore, Isabel's letters (copied by Montgomery) act as proofs 'to my descendants that I have not exaggerated my problems' (*SJ4*: 164).[195] As with everything else in the journals, this is a tale in which the authority lies solely in the journals' narrator.

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192 For instance, Montgomery never completely reveals the details of the problems her oldest son Chester caused her.

193 The journals worked as legal, written evidence for many events in Montgomery's life, such as the trial with a fellow villager, Marshall Pickering. Even though Montgomery intended the journals to be only posthumously published, she regarded their contents as proof for prevailing incidents (see e.g. Devereux 2005: 241).

194 In Cavert's (November 3, 2014, email to the author) opinion, it was Nora's influence that made Montgomery write about Isabel and lesbianism in the journals. According to her, 'it is not a coincidence that [Montgomery's] awareness of lesbianism started around 1929 after Nora returned in 1928'.

195 Robinson (2012: 186) points out that 'Montgomery troubles the truth of her own confessional by maintaining control over her own narrative; she does so, in part, by transcribing Isabel's letters into her journal, rather than simply saving the originals'.

This authority is achieved in two ways. First, the narrator claims to know 'the truth' about Isabel (see *SJ4*: 34) and present it in a supposedly objective light. This posits the narrator as the one who has authority over the matter, in other words, the one who can expose Isabel's perversity of which Isabel seems unaware. Second, Montgomery exercises authorial power and control over Isabel. Montgomery's status as a famous author gives her view of the affair immense value. Third, on the textual level it is the one in charge of telling the story, the author or rather the narrator, who controls the narrative. Montgomery not only has authority over truth, but she also has authorial control over Isabel who is objectified and narrated into a character moulded by the author.[196]

Robinson (2012: 168) presents a related reading of the Isabel affair in her essay 'Sex Matters', which supports the view that Montgomery was protecting her reputation. In her opinion, Montgomery introduces Isabel in the journals in order to establish her own love for women as normal, that is, to construct an image of herself as distinctly heterosexual for the first time (Robinson 2012: 168).[197] Robinson's (2012: 185–186) conclusion offers a welcome departure in analysing Montgomery's discussion of Isabel. I would go on to claim that Montgomery establishes a double narrative in which on the one hand, she redefines the sexual categories of same-sex love, characterising herself as 'normal' in contrast to Isabel's abnormality, as Robinson (2012: 172) suggests. On the other hand, however, Montgomery systematically continues the romantic narrative that is developed throughout the journals. This narrative is the familiar one of unrequited love in which other people usually fall in love with the narrated I, while she remains emotionally unattached. In this reading, the lesbian thematics begin to feel superimposed. On the whole, Montgomery's romantic discourse cannot be interpreted and defined within the dualistic paradigm of homosexual and heterosexual love, but rather in relation to the conventions of literary romance.

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196 As Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen (2006: 24) write in the introduction to *After Green Gables*, even with her correspondence with Weber, it was Montgomery who defined the boundaries of the relationship, 'boundaries Montgomery did her best to outline and patrol'. In her letters to Weber, Montgomery 'conveyed her interpretation of self … with a precise and unwavering confidence suggestive of her well-controlled sense of herself as a public person, ever creating and re-creating herself in performance' (Tiessen and Tiessen 2006: 24).

197 Indeed, as Smith (1997: 8) has argued, 'the presence of the lesbian functions as a pretext for the reassertion of the heterosexual plot'.

6.2 DEFINING THE 'SEXUAL INVERT' AND LITERARY MODELS

How, then, does Montgomery discuss the topic of 'sex perverts' in relation to Isabel? As Robinson (2012: 170) notes, 'Montgomery was caught in a time period during which attitudes toward friendship and marriage were undergoing seismic shifts'. Hence, it is not surprising that Montgomery felt the need to overtly analyse sexual categories for the first time in the journals so as to establish her own position. This position is right from the beginning firmly tied to another authority: the medical realm. The narrator builds a strong case of purity and objectivity in presenting the topic: 'The subject of "sex perverts" has been aired sufficiently of late in certain malodorous works of fiction. I had learned of it in the cleaner medium of medical volumes' (*SJ4*: 34). Juxtaposing fiction and scientific literature, the narrator distances herself from dirty scandal novels and claims to have only read the 'cleaner' medical books. Montgomery was not alone in exploring these books. According to Vicinus (2004: 203), sexologists writing in this time had a wide audience among the educated reading public. Not only is the sexologists' presentation of sexual categories apparently more reliable and pure than those in fiction, but it also endows Montgomery's narrative with added authority and power.

The narrator claims that 'there was something in it [the subject of "sex perverts"] that nauseated me to my very soul centre but I did not think of it as anything that would ever touch my life in any way' (*SJ4*: 34), thus further separating herself from the world of sexual deviants. Connecting the topic to disgust through words such as 'nauseate', the narrator attests the narrated I's normality and distances her from any kind of perversion. In addition to echoing lesbian panic, Montgomery draws a line between her own interactions with women and those of Isabel and her kind. Lillian Faderman (1991: 54) indicates that this was common to many early twentieth-century women: 'Having discovered the judgments of the sexologists, [many women] formulated similar rationalizations to make a distinction between their love and what they read about in medical books'. Furthermore, as Jonathan Katz (1995: 90) has pointed out, the invention of the term and concept of *homosexuality* (lesbianism included) was intrinsically tied to the invention of *heterosexuality* as a sexual tendency. Hence, not only did 'the new heterosexual woman … cast suspicions of carnal lust on women's passionate romantic friendships with other women' – as in the above case of Isabel – it also enabled the emergence of the heterosexual woman's opposite, 'a menacing female monster, "the lesbian"' (Katz 1995: 90), which is definitely the role reserved for Isabel in Montgomery's journals.

It seems highly unlikely that Montgomery had not read any of the 'malodorous works of fiction' she refers to. Faderman (1991: 101) notes that 'the contradictory notions of lesbianism as both immoral and sick were especially common in the literature aimed at a broad reading public', reflecting exactly the kind of opinions Montgomery's journal entries contain. The fact that the narrator mentions knowing about works of fiction that discuss the subject of 'sex perverts' guides the focus of the text to the fictional realm. Overtly, of course, it is important for Montgomery to remain objective and speak from a scientific and medical position. On the level of the (sub)text, however, the narrator is inclined to reproduce the clichéd portrayal of the lesbian, commonly found in the popular fiction of the 1920s and 1930s.

The stereotypical representation of the lesbian is not an anomaly in the literature of the 1920s and 1930s. According to Faderman (1991: 65), 'the extent to which the subject [lesbianism] fascinated the public is suggested by its popularity in American fiction of the era'. The lesbian did not merely appear in pulp and popular fiction, but eminent writers such as Ernest Hemingway, Dorothy Parker and William Carlos Williams also touched on the topic (Faderman 1991: 98). Especially Radclyffe Hall's novel *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) introduced the lesbian thematics into mainstream fiction in the United States (Faderman 1991: 56).

Montgomery was certainly familiar with the literature of the time and whether conscious of it or not, she seems to draw on it in her portrayal of Isabel. For instance, Faderman (1991: 102) suggests that depicting the lesbian as suicidal, self-loathing and stuck in hopeless passion was very common in the fictional texts of this era. Faderman (1991: 103–104) mentions two Broadway plays, *Girls in Uniform* and *Children's Hour*, that include a character who commits suicide after realising she is a lesbian. Faderman (1991: 103) sums up: '[Theatrical depictions] never showed that lesbians could be anything other than neurotic, tragic or absurd', all characteristics that epitomise Isabel. Furthermore, the image of the lesbian was 'either sick or sinful, and no one would want to be considered one' (Faderman 1991: 105).[198]

Following this strand of the 'suicidal lesbian', the narrator refers to Isabel's suicidal tendencies on several occasions in the journals. In the March 1, 1930 entry this trait is presented after Isabel has been classified as a pervert. The narrator ponders: 'I dared not show her [Isabel] my repulsion and disgust. Who knew what the unfortunate girl might do?' (*SJ4*: 34). Later on within the same entry, the narrator restates justifying a visit to Isabel's: 'I surrendered and went. I was afraid

198 The pejorative image of the lesbian at this time is connected to the anti-feminist reaction to the women's movement, which was gaining new strength in the early nineteenth century, and to female bonding, which now appeared as a threat to the status quo of civilisation (Faderman 1991: 46).

not to – afraid that the girl would do heaven knows what if I didn't go' (*SJ4*: 34).[199] In an entry of June 1, 1931, the narrator mentions Isabel's letter in which she 'speaks in a veiled fashion of suicide' (*SJ4*: 122) (the actual letter is not quoted). In the entry dated February 7, 1932, the narrator admits that 'it would [not] take much to send her [Isabel] over the borderline into insanity – or suicide' (*SJ4*: 164). And finally, in the February 11, 1932 entry, Isabel's letter is reproduced in which she talks of her desire to 'die for love of L.M. Montgomery' (*SJ4*: 166), which combines Isabel's supposed suicidal tendencies with her fan effusions.

Regardless of what the personality of the historical Isabel Anderson was like, in the journals Montgomery crafts a fictional character called Isabel (*Isobel* in the published journals) who follows in the footsteps of the 1930s fictional lesbian. Not only is Isabel portrayed as a sadistic person who 'persecutes' and 'pesters' the narrated I of the journals (*SJ4*: 46, 63), but she is also an apparently confused and hysterical lesbian who, when not causing others to suffer, 'suffers herself and is doomed to be an outcast and lonely', encompassing all the attributes Faderman (1981: 349) lists in her survey of fictional lesbian characters in the novels and short stories of this era. Even Isabel's own words (from a letter Montgomery reproduces in the journal) are used to support this image. 'And after this shameless confession don't you think I am a terrible creature?' (*SJ4*: 36), Isabel asks after confessing her love to the famous author, to which the narrator of the diary simply replies with an affirmative: 'I *do* think she is a "terrible creature"' (*SJ4*: 36; emphasis original). The pejorative traits of Isabel's character are mainly articulated through the narrator, who substantiates the disturbing aspects of Isabel repeatedly simply by voicing her own disgust: 'That poor girl really turns my stomach' (*SJ4*: 46); 'If the poor girl knew how I loathe her!' (*SJ4*: 122); 'My already depressed heart sank lower at the sight of her detested handwriting' (*SJ4*: 225).

The narrator also repeatedly employs the word *queer* in connection with Isabel, such as in these examples from the March 1, 1930 entry: 'Only once did she [Isabel] say anything *queer*.... [I was still] inclined to think, in spite of Isobel's *queer* speeches and *queerer* intensity of manner and personality, that I had been utterly mistaken in my fears' (*SJ4*: 35; emphases added). Connecting Isabel with this word highlights her oddity and perverse nature, whether or not it had actual sexual connotations as

199 Note that this sentence resembles the one Montgomery's friend Nora Lefurgey is quoted saying (discussed earlier): 'If you don't [cut Isabel off] you may get involved in heaven knows what dreadful scandal some day' (*SJ4*: 186).

yet, merely by the usual meanings of strange, odd, peculiar and eccentric.[200] Further proof of Isabel's perversity is presented as hearsay in the entry of May 2, 1932, when the narrated I learns from the wife of a minister in Isabel's congregation that 'Isobel has always been queer. She fell in love with one of the ministers' (*SJ4*: 181). The sexual tones of the word *queer* are more evident here as the narrator becomes more knowledgeable on the diverse aspects of perversions. While Isabel's condition is often seen as general sexual promiscuity – 'The fair Isobel seems to have a knack of falling in love and apparently it matters little with which sex!' (*SJ4*: 181) – her *queerness*, referring to lesbianism, is always emphatically in the picture: 'Yet I am sorry for her. It is appalling to be cursed as she is' (*SJ4*: 181).

Again, Montgomery is crafting an artistically satisfying tale that relies heavily on fictional precursors. Connected with fictionalisation is not only the characterisation of Isabel, but also of Montgomery herself. After all, she is and remains the main protagonist throughout the journals, whether the topic was the death of her closest female friend or a passionate triangle love drama. Focusing on the I of the diary is common to all journal writing – why would the Isabel entries prove an exception? The main focus of the Isabel entries, if looked carefully, is not on portraying Isabel as a lesbian, but portraying Montgomery as *not* a lesbian (see also Robinson 2012: 172). Here we again touch on why Montgomery includes the tale of Isabel in the journals. Protecting her reputation can be interpreted as one of the main reasons, but not because of Montgomery's dangerous connection to a lesbian. Rather, Montgomery is worried that posthumously she might be seen as one.[201] As Robinson (2012: 183) has suggested, Montgomery not only protects her reputation with the figure of Isabel, but uses her fan to create one. As elsewhere in the journals, fictional models play an important role here too.

According to Faderman (1991: 98), married women who had lesbian affairs appeared in numerous novels and short stories in the 1930s. Faderman (1991: 98) mentions for instance Sheila Donisthorpe's *Loveliest of Friends* from 1931, alongside

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200 Faderman (1991: 105) mentions terms used by lesbians in the 1930s, many of which emanated from women's prisons, such as 'gay' and 'queer bird'. It is possible that the word *queer* had already begun to be associated with homosexuals at this time. *The Oxford English Dictionary* gives literary examples from the 1930s in which *queer* equals *homosexual*: '"He's not queer, or something, is he?" "Lord, no! Worse than that. He's a convert."'; 'Men dressed as women? ... Do you mean they're queer?' (*OED* 'queer'; J. G. Cozzen: *Men & Brethren,* 1936; C. Isherwood: *Goodbye to Berlin*, 1939).

201 Robinson (2012: 179) corroborates the point in her article by stating that 'by about 1928 or so, a woman who is not passive, who supports her family economically, who derives all of her emotional support and fulfilling relationships primarily from women, and who acknowledges ambivalence about relationships with men might very well be considered abnormal or sick or perverted. Montgomery did, and was, all of the above'.

with Williams' 'The Knife of the Times' (1932), Parker's 'Glory in Daytime' (1934) and Hemingway's 'The Sea Change' (1938). Hence, Montgomery would surely have been afraid that she be seen as such a 'married woman'. Montgomery's public image actually fitted most of the new characteristics allotted for the lesbian around the 1920s and 1930s: she was an 'intellectually sophisticated older woman' (Vicinus 2004: 202) with artistic skills, suffering from 'nerves' and earning her own living, thus suspiciously masculine. Often in fiction, this type of older woman 'preyed upon vulnerable and naïve young women', as Vicinus (2004: 202) notes. Since this was the common theme in many novels and short-stories, it is not surprising that Montgomery tries to separate herself from the 'mannish lesbian' so resolutely. For instance, the narrator highlights in her letters to Isabel their age difference as an obstacle to fulfilling friendship: '[O]nly a limited friendship is possible between two people so far sundered in age and experience as we are' (*SJ4*: 216).

Montgomery's and Isabel's roles are never permanently fixed, however, but remain in flux. The most obvious reading of the two women's representation is that Montgomery is part of the nineteenth-century tradition of romantic friendship, in which women could share deep intimacies without raising suspicion about sexual contact, and this reading is indeed supported by the narrator's strategies. As Faderman (1991: 48) suggests, such naiveté in the 1930s was possible for women who, like Montgomery, came out of the romantic friendship tradition and were steeped in its literature. Isabel, on the other hand, is emphatically depicted as the embodiment of the modern sexual invert, whose existence is based on sophisticated medical knowledge of same-sex erotic interaction.

However, since on the narrative level it is always the narrator/Montgomery who defines Isabel's 'condition' and presents superior understanding about lesbianism, Montgomery's role as an expert on lesbianism could be juxtaposed with Isabel's innocence in the matter, hence connecting Isabel rather than Montgomery with the romantic friendship tradition. Although Isabel was not a Victorian as such, she was most definitely 'steeped in its literature', as for instance Montgomery's fiction which is full of such romantic friendships. As Robinson (2012: 181) mentions, Isabel's appearance in the 1920s and 1930s was unfortunate for her, since the discourse on women's romantic friendships had changed drastically by then.

Given that the narrative in Montgomery's journals needs to balance out all these fictional expectations – to prove the reader that Isabel is perverted, but that Montgomery is definitely not, even though she interacts with Isabel –, the patterns that keep recurring become less contradictory. That is, the narrator repeatedly emphasises the narrated I's role as a benefactor – 'I wanted to help her [Isabel]

if possible' (*SJ4*: 35) – but also as a trusting and innocent person who simply cannot believe in Isabel's perversion. When something that might be interpreted as suspicious is described, the narrator distances the narrated I from possible perversion emphatically, as in the March 1, 1930 entry: 'I even "slept" with Isobel. I hate "sleeping" with strangers but apart from that I had nothing to complain of, and I decided I had been a nasty-minded idiot to think of Isobel as I had done' (*SJ4*: 35). Here the quotation marks around 'sleep' point to the narrator simultaneously demonstrating that she is aware of the likely connotations that the verb *sleep* might entail when depicting two women, but also vying for innocence and neutrality by way of separating a certain type of sleeping from other types.

It should be noted that this discourse is to some extent reproduced in Rubio's biography, *L.M. Montgomery: The Gift of Wings* (2008). That is, Rubio (2008: 394) introduces Isabel into the life story of Montgomery by cautioning the readers of what to expect: 'In the 1930s, Maud was nearly consumed by another inferno – the passion she had stirred in a young woman from a nearby town. It is one of the strangest episodes in her entire life'. Words such as 'inferno' and 'passion' carry strong weight, as well as the idea that Montgomery was apparently 'consumed' by Isabel, wording that implies the 1930s fictional view of the lesbian as a vampire.[202]

Montgomery's interaction with Isabel is one of the strangest episodes in her life in terms of Montgomery's own account of it, which is hyperbolical and exaggerated, and if one thinks it strange that strong passions can occur between two women.[203] Rubio's interpretation of the affair understandably draws on Montgomery's point of view – this is a biography of the famous author, after all – but it follows rather closely Montgomery's narration of her relationship with Isabel.

As for Isabel's fan behaviour, it might well be defined as 'strange' and disturbing. Although Montgomery willingly allowed Isabel to enter her life and family circle, Isabel's behaviour as presented in the journals is intense and continuous, that is, what we today might call harassment. However, the way Montgomery's journal account of the relationship is related in the biography is equally one-sided. Montgomery is

202 Novels that featured lesbian vampires were common in the American fiction of the early twentieth century (Faderman 1981: 341). Some of these novels include for example Clemence Dane's *Regiment of Women* (1915) and Francis Brett Young's *White Ladies* (1935). There are instances in Montgomery's journals in which the narrative reveals familiarity with the character of the lesbian vampire. For instance, in the March 13, 1928 entry, the narrator depicts witnessing two girls caressing and embracing each other 'with mouths … which looked as if they had been making a meal of blood. A lipstick is really a vampirish thing' (*SJ3*: 365).

203 It is tempting to speculate what our reactions to a similar affair were if Isabel had been a male fan. Would it have been seen as more natural and normal, perhaps?

presented in a very positive light, as someone who writes 'warm, encouraging words' to her fan, while Isabel is defined with words such as 'self-absorbed', 'disturbed' and 'unbalanced' (Rubio 2008: 395, 398, 399).

Some of the phrasing in the biography would have perhaps warranted a more critical perspective. For instance, Rubio (2008: 395) writes: 'After their first meeting, Isabel pelted Maud with letters.... Later, Isabel's mother died and her sister escaped to be a missionary.... Isabel, already a social misfit, became even more estranged from other people'. Surely, there is no proof that Isabel's sister left to be a missionary in order to escape Isabel, just as there is no proof that Isabel was a social misfit. On the contrary, she taught school for over forty years and was active in her church. Isabel as a historical person might have been 'entirely self-absorbed', as Rubio (2008: 395) notes, but as a fan, who demonstrated rather typical fan behaviour. In her letters to Montgomery, however, Isabel comes out as an observant and perceptive character (see 6.3).

Moreover, Montgomery's 1930s view on lesbianism as a disease is not contested. In the biography, Isabel is characterised as mentally disturbed (see Rubio 2008: 397, 399), which resonates with Montgomery's opinion that lesbianism is a sickness. The historical discussion of the invention of the term *homosexuality* is handled in one paragraph, in which Rubio (2008: 399) maintains that Montgomery did not see homosexuality as a disease and a sin: '[Maud] saw it as an attribute existing most likely from birth, beyond conscious control'. However, Montgomery writes in her journal: '[P]oor Isobel was a pervert. Not to blame for it, I suppose. Born under the curse as another girl might have been born cross-eyed or mentally deficient. But nevertheless cursed and pariah' (*SJ4*: 34). Furthermore, according to her journal entries, Montgomery sometimes presents lesbianism as something that can be controlled: 'I *know* nothing save unpleasantness can come of our association if Isobel will not tear this Lesbian horror from her heart' (*SJ4*: 211; emphasis original), which proves how complex the discourse on lesbianism in the journals is.

Montgomery echoes the common views of the 1930s supported by the medical experts. As I have noted, the idea of the lesbian was associated with images of monstrosities and decadence, but she was also seen as someone who was pathetic, 'cut off from the rest of womankind by her rare abnormality', as Faderman (1991: 99–100) notes. In an unpublished part of the September 15, 1932 entry, Montgomery faithfully recapitulates almost verbatim the opinions of sexologists, by stating that 'yet I suppose inverts [homosexuals] should be pitied, just as we pity any monstrosities' (UJ8: 411–412). This is quite harsh vocabulary from someone who around the same time addresses her closest female friend and textual lover,

Frede Campbell, in the February 11, 1932 entry by asking, 'So I "cannot love" [referring to Isabel's accusation]. Can I not, Frede? Answer from the grave' (*SJ4*: 166). Montgomery is quick to assert, however, that she is 'not a Lesbian' (*SJ4*: 166), which seems natural in light of what Faderman (1991: 32) has observed about how 'conditioning probably made it extremely difficult for most of these "proper" women to define themselves in terms that they learned were indecent'.

One needs to turn to Montgomery's fictional work to find an alternative representation of female romance and of the case of Isabel Anderson, in which this type of relationship is portrayed in a different light. As other scholars have noted, Montgomery quite probably 'vented her frustrations with Isabel by creating the fickle Hazel Marr in *Anne of Windy Poplars* [1936]' (Cavert 2005: 122). The novel was written at a time when Montgomery's relationship with Isabel was still in full bloom, but the correspondence between fiction and real life – or even fiction and life-writing – is in fact not so straightforward. Isabel cannot simply be equated with the character of Hazel, nor can we say that Montgomery wrote this episode in the novel as a direct reflection of her own relationship with Isabel. The appearance of such a worshipping fan in Montgomery's fiction at the time when she was dealing with a real-life fan is nevertheless interesting, not least because the novel depicts same-sex infatuation and idolatry.

Hazel Marr is a minor character in the episodic novel of *Anne of Windy Poplars*, which describes the time when Anne is working as a headmistress while waiting to get married to her fiancé, Gilbert.[204] The story of Hazel consists only of two chapters in the book and seems completely unrelated to any other episodes in the novel. Hazel is a friend of Anne's – she is not properly introduced except as being part of a family who are new-comers in the town where Anne is teaching – and her main role is to be a talkative and naive character who has a 'notorious "crush" on Anne' (*AWP*: 176) and who gets Anne tangled in her love drama. Rather than simply equating Hazel with Isabel – the two characters are hardly alike –, I would claim that Montgomery here writes a fictional version of a same-sex fancy that is based on admiration and hyperbole.

Interestingly enough, in *Anne of Windy Poplars* Montgomery decidedly does not give an alternative, fictional account of lesbianism, as contrasted with the account in her journal. While fiction might be seen as a more public genre than diaries, it is also more controlled by way of publisher and public opinion and demand. Thus,

204 See Marah Gubar's (2001) article '"Where Is the Boy?": The Pleasures of Postponement in the *Anne of Green Gables* Series' on the narrative tactic of postponing the culmination of romance in Montgomery's fiction.

Montgomery would never have been able to address the new phenomenon of 'sexual inverts' in her fiction as openly as she does in her private writing (see also Epperly 1992: 79). However, while private texts benefit from greater freedom in this sense, they also suffer from the ultimate connection between the name of the author and the narrator and/or main character. Once private documents become public, they have certain truth value that fictional accounts never have. In this way, fiction might sometimes reveal themes and nuances that autobiographical texts might not. The author of a fictional work enjoys certain contradictory privacy because the fictional account is known not to be straightforwardly about the author's life.

Hence, Montgomery does not write about lesbianism in *Anne of Windy Poplars*, but she does address its precursor, romantic friendship, with which she was well acquainted. By bringing this nineteenth-century phenomenon to the 1930s, Montgomery gently mocks it, with the ironic tone of the narrative, but she also validates the type of relationship she herself probably had or could have had with Isabel. On several occasions, Anne is depicted as not objecting to Hazel's adoration of her. The narrator states that 'Anne liked her [Hazel]' and that '[i]t was quite easy to be fond of Hazel' (*AWP*: 175). Most importantly, the narrative connects such crushes with youth, convincingly with the frequency of school girl fancies in the early nineteenth century,[205] and presents Hazel's fancy of Anne in the approving light of the previous century: 'Somehow, to Anne, Hazel recalled her own early youth, with all its raptures and ideals and romantic visions' (*AWP*: 175). Notably, it is not only Hazel who is infatuated with Anne, but the physical attraction is mutual: 'She [Hazel] looked so distractingly pretty in it [a hat] that Anne kissed her impulsively. "You're the prettiest thing, darling," she said admiringly' (*AWP*: 181), after which Hazel states, '"I shall never, *never* forget this *wonderful* moment, Miss Shirley".... "I feel that my beauty ... has been *consecrated*"' (*AWP*: 181; emphases original).

Montgomery was aware of the change in attitudes to female intimacy, however, so she quickly normalises the tale of Hazel by bringing in a conventional romance plot that after the first few pages takes over the story. Hazel is engaged to a man and after she confesses to Anne her doubts about the engagement, Anne by her own initiative acts as an intervener and tells the fiancé that Hazel is not in love with him. As can be suspected, things go horribly wrong, when the fiancé falls for Anne, and Hazel, finding out about Anne's intervention, is angry with her – and is thus apparently 'cured' from her crush. After all, Hazel is in love with her fiancé, whom she now thinks Anne has tried to steal from her. The narrative depicts the typical romance moments in clichéd tropes, such as the moonlight and its effect on people

205 According to Faderman (1981: 245), such school-friendships were commonly referred to as 'raves', 'spoons' or 'crushes'.

in love, thus underlining the ironic tone of the Hazel chapters and the superimposed quality of the conventional plot line.[206]

Nevertheless, there is nothing superimposed in the scolding that Anne gives to herself after the romantic mess has been revealed to her. This soliloquy could in fact also be read as a confession on Montgomery's part, and it is the only part in the fictional account that I would interpret in biographical terms: 'Admit that you were carried off your feet by flattery. Admit that you really liked Hazel's professed adoration for you. Admit you found it pleasant to be worshiped' (*AWP*: 188). If nothing else, the fictional version of same-sex infatuation, contrasted with the journal's narrative, presents it as a reciprocal affair, in which both parties share a crush and neither should be solely blamed for their actions.

6.3 ISABEL ANDERSON AS AN ANTITHESIS TO FEMALE INTIMACY

Regardless of how Montgomery depicts female intimacy in her fiction, the journals demand more complex literary tactics precisely because in them the author's and the autobiographical I's names are equated (see e.g. Lejeune 1989: 4). Hence, Montgomery writes about Isabel and lesbianism in the journals, but while doing so she has to balance the discussion by another topic, so as to not arouse suspicion. As already noted, Montgomery often combines the entries on Isabel either with a subject matter that seems rather unrelated, such as her career or familial background, or with other romances and friendships, either male or female. In the entries of June 1 and June 2, 1931 (*SJ4*: 121–135), for instance, discussion on Isabel is followed by a long report on Montgomery's ancestors. Again, seemingly unrelated material warrants Montgomery's respectability and propriety in the face of a 'lesbian' intruder. Especially two entries that are elementary to the representation of the relationship – March 1, 1930 and February 11, 1932 – use this strategy, the former by integrating Isabel's first love letter with an overview of reviews on Montgomery's books and the latter by combining another love letter from Isabel with a long reminiscence about Nate Lockhart, Montgomery's first boyfriend.

The entry of March 1, 1930, which has already been analysed in some detail, introduces Isabel Anderson. Thus, it is not surprising that Montgomery quickly

206 Gubar (2001: 64) also draws attention to this tendency in the *Anne* series by noting that 'after putting off the representation of conventional courtship as long as possible, Montgomery resorts to chronicling it in terms of storybook stereotypes, hauling out the concept of "Prince Charming" and relying on such old chestnuts as the Sleeping Beauty plot'. She continues that 'characters in the *Anne* books find romance not in the process of heterosexual courtship, but in other, odder places' (Gubar 2001: 65).

moves the focus from the disturbing fan to the safe realms of literary criticism. Along with what Rubio (2008: 397) notes in her biography – 'Maud reacted as she always did under extreme stress: she began a long writing project in her journals that was largely mechanical' –, the long section of book reviews can be seen merely as routine writing, a way for the narrator to lead the narrative away from Isabel's love letter. Assuming this, however, would be taking Montgomery's journals as non-edited and spontaneous pieces of writing, which they hardly are. Instead, the entry as a whole works as establishing the narrative structure of the entries on Isabel.

By including quotations from criticism of all her novels, Montgomery underlines that she is a famous author, that she is a person who should be taken seriously, and that her journals are public documents. All these attributes are of paramount importance for the Isabel story. First, by reminding the readers that she is a famous author, Montgomery makes it seem natural that she should induce passionate fan-like behaviour, such as that of Isabel. Second, it is crucial that the narrator is invested with authority so that readers will believe her account of the relationship. Third, by shifting the focus to literary criticism the entry assumes a public position and ceases to be simply a private lament over a troubling person. Here, if not before, the story of Isabel is transferred into the public realm, which contextualises all the subsequent entries.

It is this public domain that affects even the second type of literary strategy used in the Isabel entries. In the February 11, 1932 entry, a love letter from Isabel is combined with a long section of writing about Nate Lockhart, Montgomery's teenage boyfriend (see also Cavert 2004b: 7).[207] The obvious reason for the narrator to turn to depicting a conventional romance is contrasting a 'normal' relationship with an abnormal one and demonstrating that the narrated I is capable of love relationships with men and has always attracted attention from men. However, this is only the surface reading, planted in the text to reassure the post-Freudian public. The narrator even finishes the entry by making it seem that the whole long section on Nate has been a spontaneous outburst: 'Why am I scribbling on in this idle fashion? Just because I am lonely and homesick and like to write and think of events and people of those early happy days' (*SJ4*: 171). Analysed with more scrutiny, the part on Nate does not succeed in convincing one that conventional romance is superior to ones with women or even that the narrated I's romance with Nate differed much from that with Isabel.

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207 Cavert (2004b: 7) aptly notes that 'the 1932 journal juxtaposition of Isabel and Nate places the last person to write a love letter to her [Montgomery] next to the first person to write [one]'.

As we have seen, the early journal entries depicting Montgomery's teenage affairs mostly illustrate romances in which love is impossible on the narrated I's part. While in the February 11, 1932 entry the narrator definitely describes a genuine teenage romance with Nate, one that contrasts with the impossible one with Isabel, the lack of love is as emphatically described: 'I was romantically intrigued by him [Nate] although I was not in love' (*SJ4*: 169). The narrator goes on to claim that having romantic power over someone is nevertheless 'wonderful' and that she would 'give much to be able to feel that thrill again' (*SJ4*: 169). Considering the fact that a few pages before Isabel's hopeless infatuation and the narrated I's power over her are depicted, these two romances are clearly connected. As Montgomery was well-versed in romantic tales, the narrative about Nate follows the familiar paths of tragic romance.[208] For instance, the narrated I has paid for an ecstatic romantic moment, after having received Nate's love letter, 'in the loss of a friendship I wanted and the acquirement of a lover I did not want' (*SJ4*: 170). Again, Isabel's love letter a few pages earlier is linked to that of Nate, as Isabel writes, 'I can never be a friend while I am under the power of this terrible love for you' (*SJ4*: 165).

Interestingly enough, in both romances the impossibility of physical interaction becomes evident. With Isabel, Montgomery is adamant, physical interaction between two women is unacceptable. With Nate, however, the narrator is even more precise in highlighting her physical repulsion: 'I detested having him kiss me! … [W]hen it came down to the level of the physical I knew that never in any year to come could I marry Nate Lockhart' (*SJ4*: 170). So, while the narrated I's normality is asserted with a switch into conventional romance, this romance is far from satisfactory. Ultimately, it fails in convincing critical readers of what Montgomery probably attempted: of her 'normal' heterosexuality. It is Frede, her main female lover in the journals, whom Montgomery addresses when refuting Isabel's accusation that she cannot love (see *SJ4*: 166). Furthermore, towards the end of the February 11, 1932 entry, the narrating I asks with a genuine feeling, 'Why, is it that all through my life the men I've *liked* the best were the men I couldn't *love*?' (*SJ4*: 172; emphases original), articulating the impossibility of conforming only to one type of romantic love, at least on the level of the narrative.

Despite these diverse literary tactics, which are used to undermine the importance of Isabel Anderson to the journals' romantic narrative, the story of Isabel's and Montgomery's relationship still plays a significant part in the later journal volumes. Isabel's love for the narrated I is a romance that Montgomery wanted to include in

208 Within the February 11, 1932 entry there is a reference to an anecdote of Nate's mother, who according to the narrator was a 'heroine of a romantic tale' (*SJ4*: 168).

the journals, which is corroborated for instance by the incorporation of the Isabel entries unedited in the typescript that Montgomery prepared of the journals before her death. Isabel's role in the life story of Montgomery is that of a romantic lover, similarly to Frede Campbell, whose literary role Isabel fills in the journals after Frede's death. Evidently, Isabel is very much an unwanted lover, which Frede was never portrayed as, but even so, Montgomery includes some of Isabel's letters in her journal throughout over the ten years they corresponded. Towards the end of her life saga, Montgomery must maintain the romantic narrative of the journals and portray herself as someone who is capable of attracting admiration and love, as Cavert (2004a: 12) has also noted. Isabel's letters fulfil this task perfectly.

The epistolary quality of the Isabel entries should not pass unnoticed. Most aspects of the relationship between the narrated I and Isabel are conveyed in letters, copied by Montgomery in the journal. What this means is that Montgomery's relationship with Isabel equals Montgomery's other important relationships disclosed in letters or other types of joint writing, such as Montgomery's secret diary with Nora Lefurgey, Montgomery's life-long correspondence with pen-friends Ephraim Weber and George Boyd Macmillan, and the inclusion in the journal of Montgomery's and Frede's ten year letters and cards to each other. Only on rare occasions does Montgomery let the other party of a romantic relationship have a voice in the journals, but with Isabel this is the case more often than not.

Although Montgomery claims to include Isabel's letters only as proof to her descendants of Isabel's impossible behaviour, the romantic tone of the letters signifies more. In fact, the only 'problem' with the letters is that they are from one woman to another, as the narrator makes clear: 'When one reflects that this is a letter written by a woman to another woman the nature of my problem is apparent' (*SJ4*: 211). Other than that, they appear as typical love letters with nothing abnormal or pathological about them.

The words attributed to Isabel are hardly words of a madwoman, as Montgomery would have her readers believe. Isabel's insights into the relationship and Montgomery are perceptive and accurate, and perhaps that is why Montgomery included them in the journal. For instance, in the February 11, 1932 entry, which features one of Isabel's long letters, she writes: 'When I think of a husband [referring to Ewan Macdonald], my imagination always becomes entangled in the stars and never goes any further' (*SJ4*: 164), echoing what comes across in the journals in general. Isabel also tries to establish her position as a sane and clear-headed person by finishing her letter, 'I being in my right mind, calm and unperturbed by the

seething mass of humanity [Isabel's pupils] around me' (*SJ4*: 166). Thus, analysing the letters, the most accurate reading follows the characteristics of love letters that depict an unhappy and one-sided romance.

In one of her outbursts of admiration Isabel writes: 'You are lovely. I had such an eye feast. You really are a beautiful woman. … You have beautiful eyes, and hair and skin, and a sweet sweet mouth and a face as pretty as a flower … And such a rich personality. You are so lovely that you are heartbreak to me' (*SJ4*: 165). By incorporating such open flattery on the narrated I, the narrator guides the tale into the by now familiar ground: both men and women fall helplessly for the narrated I who cannot return their love. Isabel is under a love spell she cannot quell, which in turn characterises the narrated I as the perfect heroine of a romantic tale, a beautiful but unattainable object of desire. Isabel's love repeats all the earlier romances in the journals, but this is the only instance of the unfortunate lover being a woman. Isabel's letters show that love is not terrible because its object is another woman, but because love in general is a terrible force. Through the voice of Isabel, Montgomery's journals articulate this: 'I do know it [Isabel's love for Montgomery] is nothing unnatural' (*SJ4*: 165). Isabel then sums up what this romance is about: 'It's just the age old pitiful tale of a heart consumed with love for one who has none to give' (*SJ4*: 166).[209]

In her letter dated February 8, 1932, Isabel also refers to Montgomery's accusations about her 'condition' and to Montgomery's supposedly superior knowledge on the medical analysis of lesbianism: 'I suppose I should be psychoanalysed and need shooting or something but I cannot help it and am not going to try any longer' (*SJ4*: 166). She is clearly aware of the new Freudian theories on sexuality and the distorted interpretations of them, which upheld that inverts could be cured through psychoanalysis and that homosexuality was caused by childhood trauma (Faderman 1991: 88). This does not keep Isabel from craving for Montgomery's love, like the previous unsuccessful suitors in the journals, and repeatedly it is depicted how Isabel pleads for Montgomery to write and tell that she loves her (see e.g. *SJ4*: 122). Later, in the long letter that is reproduced in the February 11, 1932 entry, Isabel analyses at length her behaviour and relationship with Montgomery and writes: 'You say you love me. I don't believe it' (*SJ4*: 164). In her journal response Montgomery does not refute this, but instead goes on to discuss how 'in my youth I had some men rave rather wildly of loving me', which again moves the focus to conventional romance.

In other words, Isabel as a romantic but unrequited lover is part of the overall romance narrative of the journals and very much central to it. Because of her

209 In her article Cavert (2004a: 14) reproduces one of Isabel's poems, which in my opinion could be interpreted as being written about a female lover.

public status, Montgomery has to define herself against the 'lesbian', but this is only the most obvious way Isabel's character is employed. On the narrative level, Montgomery utilises Isabel to validate other romances in the journals, mainly those with Frede Campbell, Nora Lefurgey and Laura Pritchard Agnew, portraying the relationship with Isabel as the antithesis that cannot equal proper female intimacy. Notably, within this comparison, it is relationships with women that are seen important enough to contest Isabel's unworthy and excessive intimacy, not relationships with men. It is in relation to romance with women that Montgomery reiterates her narrative strategy of right and wrong suitors within several entries in the final journal volumes.

The female friends that Isabel is contrasted with in these entries are Nora Lefurgey and Laura Pritchard Agnew, both of whom Montgomery befriended either in her teens or early adulthood. From 1928 onwards, Nora Lefurgey, with whom Montgomery co-authored the secret diary in 1903, lived in Toronto, close to the Macdonalds, and the two women reinstated their friendship with mutual enthusiasm.[210] It is to Nora that Montgomery turns when she seeks guidance and help with her troubling fan. 'I discussed with Nora the problem of Isobel' (*SJ4*: 186), the narrator states in the July 2, 1932 entry.

Not only is Montgomery perusing André Tridon's *Psychoanalysis and Love* (1922) in characterising Isabel as an unconscious homosexual (*SJ4:* 186),[211] she also brings in her old female comrade to epitomise the right kind of female intimacy. According to the narrator, 'Nora and I have always possessed the knack of "ragging" deliciously. I have never met anyone but Nora with whom I could play such a game' (*SJ4*: 186). As a proof of their mutual bond, the narrator draws attention to the private intimacies that the two women share, overtly denoting the incapability of Isabel to such closeness: 'I should love – I should dearly love – to play that game of fence with Isobel [Anderson] for an audience. It would give her an entirely new slant on friendship!!' (*SJ4*: 186). This sentence cunningly foreshadows the entry of August 20, 1932 in which Isabel visits Montgomery and she and Nora finally play 'the game of fence' with the poor, unsuspecting fan.

The August 20, 1932 entry depicts Nora's visit with her son to Norval for a week.

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210 Montgomery writes in the entry dated September 23, 1928 that she was 'wild with delight' when she received a letter from Nora in Toronto (*SJ3*: 377). She continues that when the two women met, they 'clicked' instantly despite the twenty-four-year separation: 'Apart from Laura Pritchard and Frede Campbell, Nora Lefurgey … is the only friend I have ever had before whom I could, in Emerson's fine phrase, "think aloud"' (*SJ3*: 378).

211 Montgomery misspells his name as 'Andre Thedon' (*SJ4*: 186).

It is a romantic entry and an ode to female intimacy, just as earlier entries in which Montgomery's relationship with Frede is described. The only difference from the Frede entries is Isabel Anderson's permeating presence. First the narrator sings praises of her friendship with Nora and then a striking antithesis to that friendship – Isabel's peculiar and awkward behaviour – is incorporated into the storyline.

As with Frede, the narrated I's intimate moments with Nora occur during long walks in nature, usually in the moonlight:

> [E]very evening after the supper dishes were finished, we walked four miles, in a lovely ecstatic freedom under a harvest moon.... From the moment we found ourselves amid the moon-patterned shadows of that road every particle of care and worry seemed to be wiped out of our minds and souls as if by magic. (*SJ4*: 189)

Nora's and Montgomery's connection is presented as seamless and natural, as marked with the narration switching into the communal 'we': 'Sometimes we talked. Sometimes we merely walked in silence, tasting our own wild joy. ... Our minds seemed to strike sparks from each other' (*SJ4*: 190). The narrator even confesses that she has 'never met anyone ... not even Frede, to whom nature means as much as it does to me, except Nora' (*SJ4*: 190).

Nora also writes about the moonlight walk in her diary on August 19, 1932.[212] Her diary is much less edited than that of Montgomery and not published, and thus presents an alternate written version of the same day and demonstrates the literary quality of Montgomery's journal. Whereas Nora recounts the moonlight walk in one short line – 'Maud and I walked in the moonlight so bright that we could even see the expressions on each other's faces, and quoted reams of poetry' (Lefurgey: August 19, 1932) – and then goes on to relate her thoughts during that walk, namely reminisces of her late son's birth, Montgomery builds a tale of female intimacy around the same walk.[213]

Interestingly enough, Nora also mentions 'the female pervert Isabelle [sic] Anderson' in her diary (Lefurgey: August 19, 1932). Her concise verdict on Isabel

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212 The diary is unpublished and all quotes from it are made courtesy of Mary Beth Cavert. The following excerpts are also quoted in Cavert's (2005: 114–121) essay in *The Intimate Life of L.M. Montgomery*.

213 However, at the end of the entry Nora quotes a few poems, among them a line from Montgomery, which seems to suggest that their intimate walk was also important to her: '"The laughter of the river underneath the moon" – Maud, while strolling along the Credit in the moonlight. Aug. 1932' (Lefurgey: August 19, 1932; see also Cavert 2005: 117).

echoes Montgomery's portrayal of her fan and indeed, Nora's opinion probably influenced Montgomery: '[Isabel Anderson] visited Maud a whole day while I was there. Her ability for complete abeyance of all speech is phenominal [sic]. How can Maud stand her?' (Lefurgey: August 19, 1932). But even Nora seems to support the romantic friendship ideology of the previous century in her judgement on Isabel. She ends the paragraph on Isabel with a revealing sentence, 'Is not even pretty' (ibid.), as if to suggest that Montgomery's relationship with Isabel would be understandable if it offered aesthetic pleasure and the kind of effusion that nineteenth-century romantic friendships provided women.

Isabel does not stand a chance when contrasted with Montgomery's perfect friendship with Nora. The narrator presents her in a very pejorative light, in which Isabel comes out as a sulky, mute and difficult person, everything that Nora is not. The two women begin to tease Isabel by putting on a show of insulting each other in front of the unsuspecting Isabel. The narrator gloats over their success enthusiastically: 'I'm sure it was a weird revelation to her of what friendship with me might be!!' (*SJ4*: 192), underlining the right and wrong types of friendships depicted in the journals.

Towards the end of the entry of August 20, 1932, the narrator even vents her frustration with Isabel's foolish behaviour by stating that she was 'simply very angry with Isobel' (*SJ4*: 192): 'I would dearly have loved to have taken Miss Isobel across my knee and administered a sound and salutary spanking by way of giving her a lesson in elementary good manners, common sense and ordinary decency' (*SJ4:* 192). Compared to the close-to-perfect walks with Nora, of which there are two more mentions in the September 11, 1932 entry, Isabel and her visits are presented as abhorrent in every respect, lacking especially in everything 'common' and 'ordinary', in other words, normal.

Isabel is also contrasted with Laura Pritchard Agnew, a friend from Montgomery's youth during the year spent in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1890–1891. Not long after Isabel is introduced in the journals, Montgomery goes to visit Laura in the west in October 1930 after a separation of almost forty years. In the entries depicting the narrated I's visit, there is no need for the narrator to hide her enthusiasm over the recuperation of this long-lasting female friendship or not talk candidly about love for a woman.

When the two women meet for the first time after the long separation, described in the October 2, 1930 entry, they would 'embrace and kiss – draw back and look at each other – embrace again. … Time had ceased to have any meaning for us'

(*SJ4*: 68). The narrator vows: 'I have never in all my life felt so extraordinary and overwhelming an emotion as I felt then. … I knew then that love was immortal' (*SJ4*: 68). This overt talk of love is quite extraordinary in the journals, but it does occur with Laura, just as with Frede Campbell. Nonetheless, there is something very intimate and sensual about the way the connection between the two women is conveyed. As Robinson (2012: 182–183) has noted, Montgomery's relationship with Laura is always presented in physical terms.[214] They love each other from their 'very first handclasp' and when sitting 'hand in hand' before a fireplace after their reunion, the two women realise 'what we had lost out of life in all these years because we had been separated' (*SJ4*: 70), that is, because there has been a physical distance between them.

Writing about her love for Laura, Montgomery employs similar metaphors that depicted her love for Frede, as in the sentence, 'the chords of our natures are still perfectly attuned' (*SJ4*: 70). Laura's role in the journals is akin to that of Frede: she is a romantic counterpart to the narrated I, a lover whose eventual loss allows the narrator to create a story of perfect romance. After Laura's death in 1932, the narrator goes over their friendship in the long entry of November 26, 1933 – most of which was omitted from the published journals – and portrays their first meeting with dramatic foreshadowing: 'I dreamed not that here stood a destined friend – one whom I was to love for long years with all my power of loving – one who was to enrich my life with her love – whose death was to wring my heart as it has been wrung only by one other' (UJ8: 506–520). With this overt reference to Frede – the other dead lover – the narrative connects the two women and places them in the position of the right suitor.

Isabel, on the other hand, is left with the role of the wrong suitor. She is overtly juxtaposed with Laura after Montgomery hears from the latter's death two years after her visit to the west. Isabel's letter is quoted in the September 15, 1932 entry, in which she once again expresses her unwanted love and its 'disgusting' manner, at least according to the narrator (*SJ4*: 200). At the end of this entry the narrator exclaims: 'Yet she [Isabel] lives on and my Laura is taken! What a ridiculous and tiresome world it is!' (*SJ4*: 201), thus stressing the difference between the right and

214 Montgomery rarely describes physical interaction in the journals, either with men or women, and thus instances where it surfaces are significant. In the entry of March 13, 1928 Montgomery writes of witnessing 'two young girls who called themselves "friends"' kissing and caressing each other (*SJ3*: 365). This prompts her to discuss her own behaviour with her girlfriends: 'It suddenly occurred to me how little I and my friends were ever given to physical caresses – even in emotional youth. To me, it has always been positively abhorrent to kiss or caress one of my own sex' (*SJ3*: 365). Following Robinson's (2012: 182–183) argument, it seems likely that Montgomery added this paragraph as a proof of her heterosexuality when she was copying her journals. See Robinson's (2012: 182–183) discussion of the same paragraph.

wrong kind of female intimacy. Depicted in this entry is also the fact that Isabel loves the narrated I 'so terribly', while the narrated I's genuine love for Laura 'burst into a second blooming' during their reunion (*SJ4*: 200). There seems to be no difference between these two kinds of love, except for the necessary 'perversity' of one and the 'naturality' of the other when portrayed in the journals.

Isabel Anderson and Laura Pritchard are also connected when it comes to editing out female intimacy in the published journals. On this extra-textual level, one can see how both the fulfilling type of female romance and its antithesis were to some extent edited out in *The Selected Journals*. The long entry of November 26, 1933 that includes a biography of Laura was almost completely omitted from the published journals. It is a final entry that finishes the eighth ledger (1929–1933) of Montgomery's handwritten journals and one of its functions is thus to fill the space left in the ledger. However, its significance is far from mere textual filling. The entries at the end of ledgers are usually longer artistic unities and Montgomery often puts extra effort in writing them, creating historical and autobiographical texts within her diary.

The biography of Laura in the November 26, 1933 entry is a similar brief biography to a deceased friend as the one Montgomery composed of Frede after her death in 1919. It is also a beautiful song of praise for female friendship and intimacy and very detailed in its depiction. Thus it is telling that in *The Selected Journals* the entry was cut out after this section: 'During recent weeks I have been reading over Laura's letters.... *I have been with Laura*. ... Ere I fell on sleep her [Laura's] head was on my pillow and we were girls again, chattering of boys and balls' (*SJ4*: 237; emphasis original). From here on the editors jump to the year 1936, in which a retrospective entry of the preceding years is provided (covering Montgomery's pause in journal-keeping), which gives an account of her son Chester's clandestine marriage. The omission of the entry on Laura in some measure ignores the importance of female intimacy in the artistic project of Montgomery's journals and gives an impression that their friendship focused solely on 'chattering of boys and balls'.

What is left out is the portrait of female romance that Laura's biography paints, with sentences such as, 'From that hour we were each other's. ... We were old, old friends – we had known each other, loved each other – and we recognized each other. That was all' (UJ8: 506–520). Furthermore, merely the fact that Montgomery dedicates fourteen handwritten pages to honour her friendship with Laura speaks for its relevance to the romantic narrative of the journals.

Notably, in the previous entry dated November 25, 1933, the narrator reminisces about another female friend, Edith England, in a style that probably compelled

the editors to also leave this section out from the published journals. In a sincere tone the narrator depicts a past scene in which the narrated I admires the beauty of her friend Edith: 'I looked at Edith admiringly. She looked so entirely sweet and beautiful standing there in the green twilight. … I loved to look at her' (UJ8: 498–506). This distinctly homoerotic gaze, combined with the entry on Laura, was perhaps too much for the published versions of the journals, since only a few entries before Isabel and her 'love yowls' (UJ8: 495–496) are ever present (although this section too was omitted from *The Selected Journals*).

However, it is not only the more positively depicted female intimacy that was excluded from the published journals. Although the Isabel Anderson entries were mainly included in *The Selected Journals* – for instance, compared with the entries on Frede Campbell, the omissions are mainly cosmetic – there are some key entries that were left out and that are crucial to the reading of the relationship. Some, such as the entry of September 15, 1932, reiterate earlier discourse on the narrator/narrated I's disgust on Isabel's lesbian behaviour:

> Although I have told her repeatedly that I cannot and will not tolerate physical caresses she coolly informs me that she is going to "save up" my kiss of greeting … by going without it until she can have twelve all at once! A regular Lesbian gorge. (UJ8: 411–412)

But others, especially a long section of the January 22, 1933 entry, describe the two women's relationship from a slightly different angle. In this omitted part, another of Isabel's letters is quoted. In it Isabel makes a case of defending herself against Montgomery's accusations and interestingly enough gives an impression that the famous author had initially promised her more than what Montgomery's version of the story reveals. The letter and the narrator's response to it resemble a commonplace bickering of a couple, with its 'you said–I said' accusations.

Isabel's letter states for instance that '[a] so-called friendship, lacking the absolute essentials, with no opportunity whatever of overcoming the barrier, is not what you promised me' (UJ8: 446–451). She goes on to ask Montgomery, 'Why did you ever say such things as "I would love to pretend I was a schoolgirl again, sleeping with a friend"' (UJ8: 446–451), to which the narrator replies in the journal: 'She is evidently trying to convey an insinuation that I was the first to suggest sleeping together' (UJ8: 446–451; emphasis original). Another version of the incident is then provided, which adds to and changes Isabel's version and thus removes any culpability on Montgomery's part:

> [T]rying to let her [Isabel] down gently when I had to refuse her request to sleep with her I said, 'It would be very pleasant to pretend I was a schoolgirl again, spending the night with a girl friend, but *I am too old and unromantic for that sort of thing now*'. (UJ8: 446–451; emphasis added)

The narrator also confesses that she has told Isabel she has a friendly affection for her – '(as I had before she begun to make love to me)' (UJ8: 446–451) –, which does not appear elsewhere in the Isabel entries. This illuminating dialogue was omitted from *The Selected Journals* and what is left of the entry is merely Montgomery's viewpoint, a complete absence of Isabel's voice and a watering down of the complex depictions of female romance.

In addition to demonstrating the complicated strategies of depicting romance in general and female intimacy in particular in Montgomery's journals, the Isabel entries also manifest the main thread that runs through the romantic narrative: the narrator's/Montgomery's need to be in control of the story. Not only is there an aspect of possessiveness in most of the journals' romances, in which the narrated I needs to be in charge, but this possessiveness permeates the narrative level too. What could be termed *literary narcissism* makes even the romantic discourse serve the purposes of the narrator in building a complimentary image of the narrated I. The January 22, 1933 entry gives a perfect example of the narrator's fear of losing control in telling the romance story.

On the one hand, the narrator is worried over the 'facts' of the relationship with Isabel – which one of them suggested sleeping together first, for instance – but on the other, it is tampering with the truth of the story that is the real problem: '[T]his distortion of Isabel's frightens me. It shows what she may say to injure me if she takes it into her devilish head' (UJ8: 446–451). On the level of the journals' narrative Isabel's 'distortions' are unacceptable. Regardless of the fact that Montgomery included Isabel's letters in the journals herself, on the textual level there can be only one narrator and one truth about this complicated relationship and the 'perverted' fan.

6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Isabel Anderson's influence over Montgomery's life waned over the time, especially after the Macdonalds moved from Norval to Toronto in 1935. Their relationship lasted until the end of Montgomery's life, however, with Isabel occasionally visiting Montgomery in Toronto and Montgomery visiting Isabel in Acton. The journals record the receiving of Isabel's letters until 1939, when Montgomery stopped

writing in the journal ledgers, but according to the narrator the relationship and Isabel become 'more sensible' (*SJ5*: 81, 197). Isabel recovers from her infatuation for Montgomery or at least directs it to other celebrities, such as members of the royalty. Historical circumstances aside, Isabel's importance in the journals' narrative is taken over by another theme, that of depression, which defines the final entries of Montgomery's life saga. Thus, the significance of the Isabel entries to the romance story of the journals is that they finish it. Although Montgomery returns to pining over Frede towards the end of her life and emphasises this love of her life, Isabel Anderson as the antithesis to such love fills the slot for concluding the romantic storyline in the journals.

Despite Isabel's portrayal as the impossible and wrong suitor, the presence of romance in the entries on her is unquestionable. There is romance in Isabel's love letters that Montgomery includes in the journals and in the involved way the narrator recounts the minutest of details of the relationship. What the narrator wants to bring forth is the view that this tale of the dark side of female intimacy is only about one-sided love. The inclusion of all of the Isabel entries in the typescript of the journals speaks of their value to the diary's narrative. Montgomery only censored the most pejorative remarks on the passionate fan, probably worried that she might hurt Isabel's or her relatives' feelings if the journals were published posthumously.

The Isabel Anderson entries and their analysis also highlight why blurring, or even discarding, the boundaries between such rigidly defined categories as *heterosexual* or *homosexual* is paramount when examining the romantic narrative of Montgomery's journals. While Montgomery's textual romantic gaze could be called homoerotic – based on same-sex admiration and sensuality – she employs a complex non-dual system, in which rather conventional nineteenth and early twentieth-century ideas of love and romance are combined with more subversive same-sex intimacy. With the romantic friendship paradigm of the nineteenth century on the one side and the modern diagnose-obsessed discourse on female inverts on the other, Montgomery's journals balance on the verge of two eras, blending and confusing both discourses, but also creating something completely new in the process.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION: THE PROGRESS OF LOVE

In the introduction to the third published volume of *The Selected Journals* editors Rubio and Waterston (1992: xviii) note how Montgomery's gender training is firmly inscribed in the journals, but that they still manage to articulate angrier tones directed against the imposed silence. In Rubio's and Waterston's (1992: xviii) opinion, Montgomery 'writes not as an angel but as an anxious, angry, frustrated woman' – at least by the third volume when she is well over forty. Indeed, as my analysis of her portrayal of romance in the journals suggests, Montgomery's gender training does not always get the better of her and there are several instances where the anxious, angry and frustrated woman of the later re-writing and copying process lets her voice be heard. In these instances the 'forlorn heroine of a terribly sad life story' makes way for a different type of protagonist. In fact, such occasions of friction help to explain the rather contradictory accounts of romance Montgomery provides in her journal.

The disturbing aspects of Montgomery's depiction of the progress of love stem from its discordant nuances, that is, from the fact that boy-talk and beaux dominate the narrative, even if the narrator shuns the word love. Clearly, it was much easier and safer for Montgomery to depict and express love towards her female friends. As Gammel (2005a: 139) has pointed out, Montgomery – or the journal's narrating I – is in the habit of denigrating the few men she is attracted to, which is part and parcel of the ambiguous tactics of the journal. The first few volumes of the handwritten journals offer an endless succession of proposals, beaux, moonlight walks and rides, but also an equally endless series of instances in which the narrator portrays the narrated I retracing her steps when things get too serious and draws a veil over her feelings. On the other hand, by the third and fourth volumes (1910–1919), Montgomery has firmly established another kind of romance narrative, one that involves only her closest female friends (and an unfortunate fan) and presents an alternative fantasy of the perfect romance story, as we have seen in the last three analytical chapters.

One reading of these inconsistencies is that the author of the journal is not willing to provide the expected closure to the conventional romance narrative by its culmination in marriage. Although Montgomery married Ewan Macdonald

and even included an erotically charged portion in her journal in relation to the Herman Leard affair, on the textual level the readers are not offered the traditional cathartic relief of feelings. The depiction of Montgomery's wedding, honeymoon and married life is vague to say the least and far from romantic. In addition, in the more passionate and explicitly narrated two suitors entries, the romance plot that is supposed to end in marriage or sexual consummation offers neither. This illustrates the way the journal operates as a complex narrative and textual entity, especially when it comes to conventional romance.

A citation from the fifth unpublished volume of the journals further reminds us that we need to take into account the extent to which Montgomery writes about her romances within the conventions and discourses of her time, indeed almost imprisoned by them as well as by her own ways of writing.[215] In an entry of January 31, 1920, the narrator states: 'I have not yet found anything much pleasanter than talking with the right kind of a man – except – but I won't write it. My descendants might be shocked' (*SJ2*: 369). By this relatively obvious reference to sex, perhaps due to the mentally and morally more relaxed nineteen-twenties, Montgomery offers an intriguing lacuna to her readers, proving a more general tendency in the journals. What is she *not* writing about? What could be inserted after Montgomery's teasing 'except': 'Having sex with the right kind of man'? 'Having sex with the right kind of woman'? 'Talking with the right kind of woman'? 'Flirting with the right kind of man or woman'? Or is this merely a strategic reference to Montgomery's 'normal' heterosexuality?

However, rather than wasting time in attempting to find an answer to Montgomery's riddle, we should note that this is what the narrative mastery of Montgomery's journals is all about. By writing a history of herself, Montgomery simultaneously makes sense of her own life and creates history in doing so, but she also creates a good story, one that she can control. This is the central paradox of Montgomery's journals: while the private medium and genre of the diary create a (false) sense of intimacy, Montgomery makes sure that the readers do not know more than they should, often under the guise of privacy, or that they know her version of the 'truth'. For this pseudo-intimate story of herself, Montgomery borrows the features from fictional narration, such as used in romance novels, historical novels, gothic romances, dime novels, domestic novels and sentimental serials, but takes the form from the diary, so as to further confuse and shroud the fictional origins and aims of her narrative.

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215 Betty Jane Wylie (1995: 195) discusses how many female diarists employ ritual, litany, clichés and stock phrases, which in her opinion have nothing to do with how they really feel.

Montgomery's self-conscious way of writing about romance is one of the main features of her journals, one that may also influence our readings of her novels. Familiar literary conventions found in the diary, from the pairing up of two suitors to the suicidal lesbian, prove how aware Montgomery was of the literary and social customs of her time, whether of the 1890s or the 1930s. The use of the motif of the fallen woman, the tragedy of *Hamlet*, the fairy tale, such as Cinderella, the gothic novel and the satirical diary novel showcase the diversity of Montgomery's art as she recreates the story of her own romances in her life-writing.

In the narrative of the journals, a main character, 'the forlorn heroine', is brought into existence and the fictionally created versions of the autobiographical I portray an unromantic woman, independent and self-sufficient without the need of a right suitor to equal her maturity. Read in this light, Montgomery's romantic discourse has a modern undertone to it, one that shows that she ultimately is quite daring. As my examination of her life-writing proves, Montgomery chooses more or less consciously to thwart the convention of the conventional romance plot. Although it is evident that she simultaneously in a way writes within the tradition – and indeed, creates a fairly typical romantic heroine at times –, the amount of humour, parody, satire and detachment of the narrator, however, should not pass unnoticed. As readers, we might be disappointed by the lack of closure and culmination to Montgomery's romances, but this is yet another indication of how deeply imprinted the expectations of the convention are even today.

When viewing Montgomery's life-writing in context, her attitude to love is easier to understand. Writing about female intimacy in a style that was usually restricted to describing conventional romance may have been a liberating strategy for Montgomery. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (1975: 28) notes in her article on women's friendships in the nineteenth century United States that female relationships offered important emotional functions for women at the time when the division of two separate gender spheres still prevailed. Creating close bonds with women did not threaten the status quo, since for instance there was no danger of becoming pregnant – a dangerous fate for an unmarried woman in Montgomery's time, as noted in chapter 3. Depicting her involvement with her sexually enticing second cousin, Oliver Macneill, with whom she flirts while being already secretly engaged to her future husband, Montgomery states: 'I have a horror of feeling thus towards any man I cannot marry. It seems to me a shameful, degrading, dangerous thing – and it is' (*CJ2*: 239).

As demonstrated in this thesis, romance is one of the most strictly controlled aspects in Montgomery's journals, largely because she was aware of her future

audience, but also owing to her gender training. Nevertheless, romance is also a theme that offers an extensively covered tradition and a rich supply of fictional models for the skilful diarist/fiction writer. Even so, there are instances in the text which let go of the conventional style of writing and fixed phrases, undoing the process that Betty Jane Wylie (1995: 195) calls 'automatic smoothing over'. Especially in the entries that depict the narrated I as utterly depressed, the frustrated and angry tones mentioned by Rubio and Waterston become evident, as when the narrator states in the December 22, 1900 entry: 'I keep my rebellion to myself and nobody suspects it. But it is there for all, seething and fermenting' (*CJ1*: 468).

As with the discourse on sexual categories discussed in chapter 6, Montgomery's journal writing can more generally be seen as the outcome of living on the borderline of two very distinct eras and worlds – the Victorian nineteenth century turning into the modern twentieth century.[216] This results in Montgomery's diverse voices echoing either lonely and depressed as in the personal journal or comical and light-hearted as in the secret diary, or both, blending into the often ambiguous narrative the diarist creates in writing. The same diversity must be extended to the analysis of Montgomery's romance discourse. Controlling the romantic image that emerges from her journals, Montgomery seems to signal that when it comes to love, the threads of the story are firmly in the hands of the author. However, reading against the grain is and should be the readers' prerogative, one that will lead to as yet unexplored paths.

7.1 PUBLIC JOURNALS, PRIVATE EDITING

In the April 16, 1922 entry, in which she mentions having completed the copying process of her early journals, Montgomery muses over the diary's possible future publication (ironically, in an unpublished section): 'Perhaps a hundred years from now my descendants may read over this diary and regard it as an interesting heirloom. By that time they can give it to the world if they like. Everyone would be dead whom its publication could hurt and I would like it to be published in full <u>without omission</u>, save for this very paragraph I have just written. Cut it out, descendants!' (UJ5: 265–267; emphasis original). Mulling over the benefits of the publication, Montgomery goes on to state that '[publishing the diary] might be a good financial proposition for them [the descendants]' (UJ5: 265–267). As can be

216 Simons (1990: 17–18) mentions three other authors and diarists, Edith Wharton, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf, who exhibit similar themes and concerns in their writing as Montgomery. According to Simons (1990:17), these three writers 'had each broken to some extent with the conventions of Victorian womanhood, yet … were still moulded by those conventions'.

judged from this rare pronouncement, Montgomery evidently saw her journal as a valuable object, worthy of publication, not merely of sentimental value, but also monetary. Naturally, being concerned about the journals being destroyed after her death, Montgomery invokes a 'Shakespearean curse' on her descendants not to disregard her wishes (*SJ3*: 51). She finishes the paragraph by stating: 'There is so much of myself in these volumes that I cannot bear the thought of their ever being destroyed. It would seem to me like a sort of murder' (*SJ3*: 51).

Hence, any study of Montgomery's journals must take into account the various facets presented in the above-quoted entry, so that we as researchers do not commit an accidental murder by misjudging and underestimating her diary. First, Montgomery's journals are public documents and have a firm standing in the public sphere – as regards market value and public image – even before they were published. Second, Montgomery's journals are artefacts and texts that Montgomery herself saw as part of her main work, not secondary to her fiction, a viewpoint that is echoed in her worry that they be destroyed. And third, the question of editing is at the heart of the journals. Montgomery's own guidelines to possible future editors and publishers – that is, in hundred years from the 1920s or 1930s the journals can be published in their entirety, but if published directly after her death, they should be published in abridged form (see *SJ3*: 51) – suggest that editing and the various textual versions of the journals must be kept at the centre of any analysis of them.

Fortunately for Montgomery and for us, her wishes have mainly been heeded. The journals that first appeared in abridged form forty years after her death have since been published partly in a more complete form, as the two volumes of *The Complete Journals* demonstrate. However, since editing is largely a private endeavour with readers unaware of the decisions and mechanisms behind the editing process, even these published versions of the journals must be analysed critically, as indeed Montgomery's handwritten volumes. Most importantly, the editing undertook by the editors Rubio and Waterston has largely affected the reading of the journals.[217] The published versions, both *The Selected Journals* and *The Complete Journals*, naturally create their version of Montgomery's romances, one that focuses on conventional romance and tones down female intimacy.

For instance, consider the December 22, 1900 entry quoted above that gave voice to a depressed and rebellious Montgomery. Coincidentally, this is also the entry that finishes the first volume of *The Complete Journals* (1889–1900), in which the narrator bemoans 'a great *soul loneliness*' (*CJ1*: 468; emphasis original). Yet, this

217 In the case of *The Selected Journals* William Toye's editing also affected them. Toye was the editor at the Oxford University Press, who published the abridged journals.

is not where Montgomery's original unpublished second volume (1897–1910) ends. It seems that the editors of *The Complete Journals* wanted to finish the published volume with this entry for several obvious reasons. The entry rounds up the year of 1900, but it also concludes the nineteenth century. In the next entry, dated January 5, 1901, which begins the second volume of *The Complete Journals*, the narrator exclaims: 'This is the twentieth century!' (*CJ2*: 3) The December entry also draws a kind of epilogue, as the year's last entry in diaries tends to do, and Montgomery notes for example that she is beginning to make an income with her writing. These are all befitting themes on which to end the published version of the first part of Montgomery's Cavendish diaries. The depressed tones of the entry point towards the more melancholy entries of the next volume, and Montgomery's view of herself as an established writer helps to construct the story of her career from an unknown scribbler to a best-seller author (the publishing of *Anne of Green Gables* is only eight years away).

Nonetheless, it is the appearance of Herman Leard in this entry that may best explain its place as the final entry of the volume. After all, the editors could easily have adhered to the volume boundaries of Montgomery's handwritten ledgers, which demonstrate Montgomery's narrative eye when she compiled the ledgers.[218] More particularly, the second handwritten volume (April 25, 1897 – February 7, 1910) deliberately begins with the tale of the two suitors and ends in the time antedating Montgomery's marriage to Ewan Macdonald. Disregarding Montgomery's narrative arc, the editors have instead included the two suitors entries at the end of the first volume of *The Complete Journals*, since they are the main romantic material of the journals, at least when it comes to conventional romance.

Thus, it is important to see to it that the readers of the published journals have an image of Herman in their mind as the defining idea of Montgomery's love life. The narrator effuses in the December 22, 1900 entry: 'Tonight … I tried to read one of *Herman's* [letters].… Well, I could not do it! … What an influence that man had over me! His mark is branded on my soul forever' (*CJ1*: 469; emphasis original). What better way to finish the most romantic volume of Montgomery's journal and to promote the view of the famous author as strictly heterosexual through the main narrative reserved for women and female authors, that of conventional romantic love. It is after all a reading that Montgomery herself to some extent tries to support by her romantic description of Herman's influence over her life. 'To think that now, two years after his death, I cannot bring myself to read a crude, impersonal letter

218 However, see Rubio (2001: 33–34) for reasons why they did not.

of his, containing nothing but commonplaces, without feeling as if a brutal hand had twisted itself among my heartstrings and was wrenching them at will' (*CJ1*: 469), Montgomery writes, and so we come back to the heartstrings that begun this dissertation. It is crucial to notice that it is not only Montgomery's rhetoric and editing that stir our heartstrings but also the workings of the editors.

In contrast to the ending the editors selected, the final entry of the first handwritten ledger (September 21, 1889 – April 19, 1897) concludes with a reference to one of Montgomery's dearest friends, Laura Pritchard Agnew. The short entry mentions that the day has been 'spring warm and sunny, with a mellow southwest wind blowing' and that Montgomery has written 'a long letter to dear Laura', the writing of which comforted her (*CJ1*: 362). This beautifully understated entry – that ends in the sentence 'tiny green things are poking their heads up in garden nooks' (*CJ1*: 362) – could not be farther from the one that completes the published version. To be sure, it shows the more 'daily' character of Montgomery's journal, but also directs readers' interest to distinctly different topics than conventional romance: nature and female friendship, which of course are intricately tied together in the journals.

As Robinson (2004: 13) maintains in her article, Montgomery scholarship has often proceeded on the assumption that Anne is 'naturally' heterosexual, and the same can definitely be said of Montgomery and the romantic narrative in her journals. The published journals to some extent highlight conventional romance, in other words, love between man and woman, but it also recurs as a conscious decision that has ruled out female intimacy from the published narrative of Montgomery's love life. When Robinson published her essay 'Bosom Friends: Lesbian Desire in L.M. Montgomery's Anne Books' (2004), it caused an uproar in the Canadian media, which trumpeted for instance that Robinson had 'outed' Anne, who many, even the tourist board of Prince Edward Island, almost regarded as a real person.[219] However, as Devereux (2002: 35) notes in her analysis of the 'Bosom Friends affair', Anne being a lesbian is only sensational if homosexuality is understood to be perverse, an 'erotic spectacle for a heterosexual audience'.

Editors are literary-critical gatekeepers and their role and influence must be included in the discussion of the shaping of any text, journals especially. At the same time, however, it must be emphasised that as gatekeepers to and preservers of Montgomery's voluminous journals, Rubio and Waterston have done a remarkable job. What is more, they, like Montgomery, also worked in a specific time and cultural

219 See http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-8595578.html (April 22, 2015).

context, indeed in a time when, as Rubio (2001: 30, 32) has mentioned, women's experience was not valued in the academia. Thus, we can be grateful that we have such an honest picture of Montgomery even in *The Selected Journals*.

7.2 DIARY AS LITERATURE

As for the wider ramifications of this study, I hope that not only Montgomery scholarship but also diary studies can benefit from the ideas explored. In my reading of Montgomery's journals I have found Robert A. Fothergill's (1974) and Judy Simons's (1990) observations on the diary very helpful, especially as regards the nature of the diary as a literary artefact. As both scholars demonstrate, treating diaries as literature, not simply as life history, can open up our understanding of diary as a genre as well as the close interdependence of fictional and diary writing. So far, diary studies have explored several questions from the role of audience and the formation of the autobiographical I to the definitions of public and private types of diaries, all questions that I have touched upon in this dissertation. More research is needed on diaries as a literary genre that easily moves between various rhetorical modes, writing styles and fictional models, at least in the hands of a skilled writer like Montgomery (see also Simons 1990: 20). Several scholars in addition to Fothergill and Simons (such as Abbott 1984, Kagle and Gramegna 1996, Makkonen 1999, Martens 1985) have studied the literary influences of diaries and vice versa, but there is much more ground to be covered when it comes to analysing the fictional aspects of literary diaries.

For me, diary is a broad genre that warrants a whole new set of questions to be explored further. Rather than concentrating on categorising diaries into 'public' or 'private' ones (see e.g. Bloom 1996), trying to decide what constitutes a diary (see e.g. Lejeune 1989), or wondering whether the self in diary is more fragmental than in other genres and whether it is a good or a bad thing (see e.g. Benstock 1988), we should move away from dichotomies to detailed readings of actual diary texts, their themes and techniques.[220] What are the roles of the narrator/narrating I and the narrated I? How does the author appear in a diary text? How have fictional texts ('texts' in the broadest sense, including oral ones) affected all kinds of diaries, from professional to lay authors? And what kinds of literary techniques might a professional author, such as Montgomery, take advantage of in the medium of diary? In a similar vein, Mary McDonald-Rissanen (2008: 37) calls for more detailed research on particular diary texts. In her opinion, 'the desire to generalize

220 However, I fully acknowledge that defining and analysing the differences between public and private types of writing is crucial.

about specific gender-related features of women's life writing has overshadowed the search for the idiosyncratic discourse strategies of individual writers' (McDonald-Rissanen 2008: 37).

To be sure, Montgomery was such an astute writer that it can be argued that she actually masked her edited autobiography to look *like* a diary, since she knew the genre markers so well and knew what the benefits of diary over autobiography were. As noted in the introduction, people usually assume diaries to be sincere, perhaps because of their supposedly quotidian nature, whereas most of us realise that autobiographies, however truthful they might appear, are stories of a person's life, in which the author usually re-creates her life events with a linear plotline. Hence, Montgomery is careful to portray her highly edited and often fictionalised text as a diary, making sure that even in the handwritten ledgers, the writing seems instantaneous and concrete (see e.g. chapter 5), as if she had composed it on the day in question. The same happens with the secret 'diary' of Montgomery and Nora Lefurgey discussed in chapter 4. What is actually a fictional diary novel is made to look like an actual joint diary by two flirtatious rural women. It is precisely because Montgomery kept a diary throughout her life that she knew the medium well enough to use it to her advantage, in the same way that writing my own diary since I was fifteen years old has surely helped me to scrutinise the many-sided features of diary writing in practice.

Montgomery was first and foremost a performative writer (see e.g. Gammel 2002b), who altered her style and techniques according to the audience and mode of writing. For instance, in her letters to her pen-friend Ephraim Weber, Montgomery creates a very different autobiographical I of herself than that found in the journals. In the letters to Weber we find an intellectual and analytical reader of literature and observer of world events, who does not mull over personal matters nor complain as much as in the journals. Despite the different image of Montgomery, however, the letters have much in common with the journals when it comes to textual performance. Here too Montgomery masks earlier material by generating authentic-sounding letters, written in one go, when in fact the material is largely borrowed from the journals and 'the other night' might refer to an incident that took place a year ago (see *After Green Gables*: 117). Phrases such as 'just at this point of writing', as the editors of the letters, Tiessen and Tiessen (*After Green Gables*: 208) note, are cues for researchers and readers alike that Montgomery's writing is performative.

Thus, some of the most interesting and important questions when it comes to Montgomery's autobiographical writing tie in with what is left unsaid. The lacunae or what is not included in the narrative – in Montgomery's case, topics as varied as

her wedding night, getting used to being a wife or the sinking of Titanic – often tell us most emphatically about the control a professional author exercises in creating an intriguing and appealing story. Not telling everything is not merely a rhetorical device, but also part of the narrative technique used. *When* something is told, or revealed, as it were, and what is left out completely may influence the reading of a journal as much as the way that it is told.

What is more, the borderlines between different genres are seldom as definite as one might think. As discussed in relation to Montgomery's journals, much of her diary material was directly transferred into her fiction, while her journal uses fictional conventions especially when presenting romance, both with men and with women, such as the two suitors convention. Montgomery wrote her journal in much the same way as she wrote her fiction, with the aid of literary conventions, formulas and clichés found in romantic and sentimental literature. As Alice Munro has noted, Montgomery was definitely in some ways boxed in by being nice and genteel (Thacker 2011: 65). This shows most obviously in the process of female intimacy changing into conventional romance when material was transposed from her journals into her fiction. On the other hand, it is precisely this process that manifests the intricate and elaborate routes that female writers have had to take and endure in order to being able to write at all. To be sure, Montgomery's journals do not present romance 'pure and simple', nor are they always realistic or genuine, but that is why they rise above the nice and genteel and manage to tell us something far more complicated about the progress of love.

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